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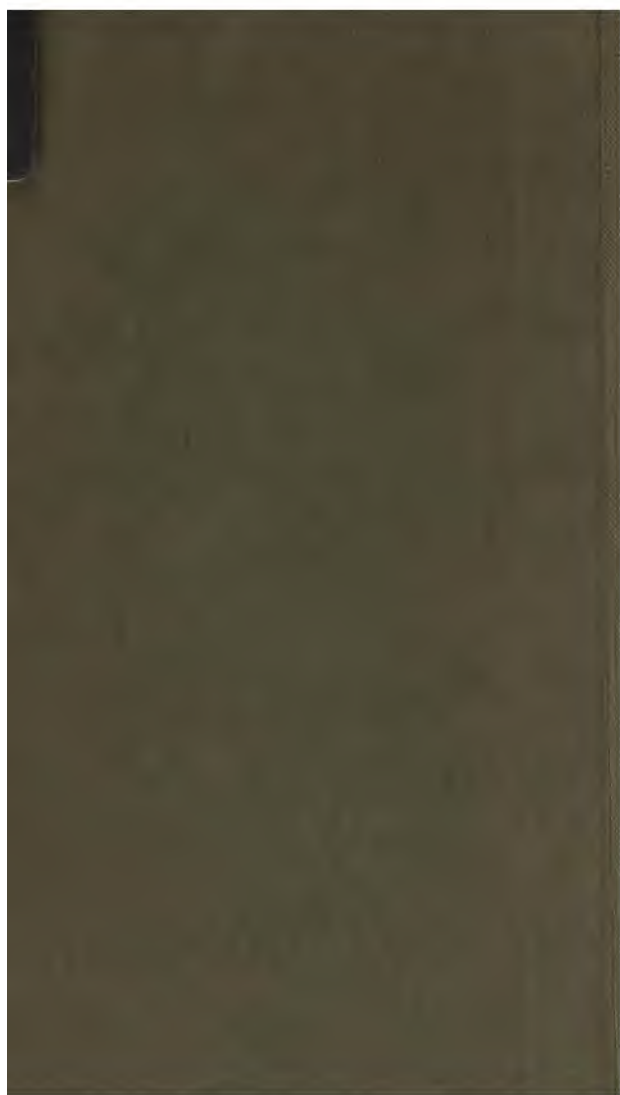
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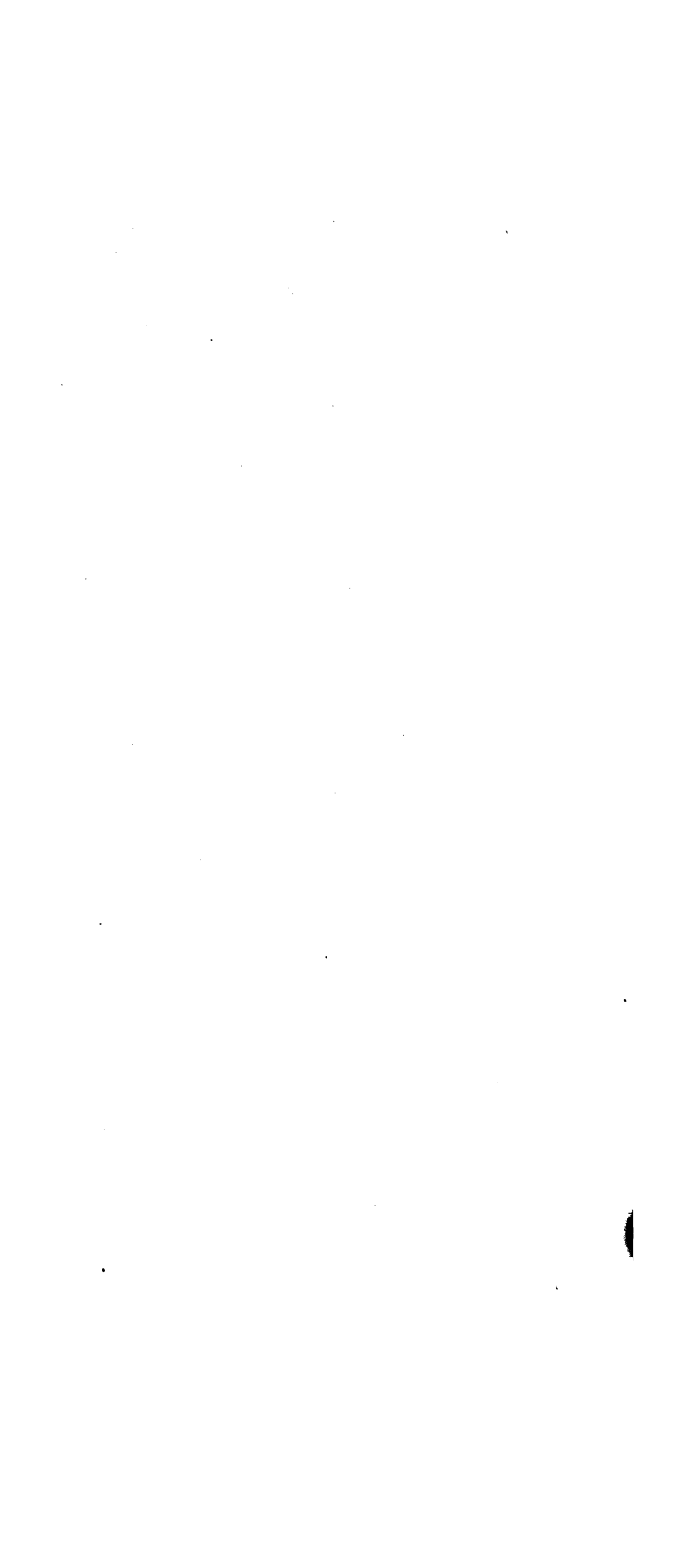
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. Fiction, English.

THE
BEGGAR BOY:

A NOVEL,
IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THE LATE
MR. THOMAS BELLAMY.

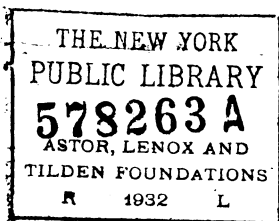
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P R E F A C E.

. SINCERE friendship for Mr. Bellamy, which commenced many years ago, and continued, without interruption, to the day of his death; an intimate acquaintance with his compositions; and some conversations with him, on the subject of the *Beggar Boy*, which he left unfinished; induced me to undertake the completion of that work, which I trust I have accomplished, without much derogation from the design or his language.

Elizabeth Sarah Villa-Real Gooch.



THE BEGGAR BOY.

CHAPTER I.

The Lady of the Castle.

“**T**HE Lady of the Castle!—Are we then to journey through deserts waste! forests drear!—encounter one-eyed giants—destroy fell enchanters—lay waste castles, where ladies fair, and courtly and courageous knights, have for centuries remained immured and spell-bound—to come at—THE BEGGAR BOY?”

The reader may depend on't, no such thing is intended; the lady alluded to is neither more nor less than *Dame Sympkins*, who, at the time this history takes its date, was mistress of The Castle, the only inn of repute in the delightful, and, in her day, flourishing village of Auburn. The moral bard of nature and of truth was then unborn, who has since adorned its fall in strains of native elegance and genuine sensibility.

A

Fanny Roberts, the pretty bar-maid of the aforefaid mansion, paid, for reasons of her own, great attention to the interests of her master, the pertly, and well-looking Boniface of the tap, till he became a widower; but, before his helpmate, Dame Sympkins, is dismissed from the page, it is proper something should be said about her.

The landlord of the Castle, after having been some years in that situation, found that the few hundreds left him by his thrifty parents, were dissipated in the support of his inn, and that it still wanted a few more to preserve its respectability. In this situation, he considered it far more eligible to take the wealthy relict of his late butcher, whose faith he had put to a heavy trial, to wife, than pay her demands, which, at that time, very far exceeded all he was worth in the world.

But the money brought him by Mrs. Sympkins did not, by any means, compensate for her extreme ill-temper, and ever-watchful jealousy. The poor man led a sad life for several years, while she was able to bustle about and be mistress of her own house; at length, health began to fail, Fanny Roberts was appointed humble substitute, and the scene underwent an entire change.

That young body had not been a month in her new situation, before a severe fit of the gout confined her mistress to her chamber, which visitation the doctor attributed to his patient making too free a use of the good things in the

bar, and which were within reach of her elbow-chair, in which easy and ancient seat it was her custom to indulge, after her fatigues every afternoon.

Matters now took a different turn. The sick woman was no longer considered as an object of terror; she was treated like one *very much in the way*; my landlord left his consequence, Fanny managed, in every respect, to his liking; and, according to the phrase of Jolly Jack Sympkins, of The Castle, "Affairs were as they should be."

The old enemy of Dame Sympkins, severe as his visit proved, at length, gave her some respite. The doctor's prescriptions produced a favorable effect, and, to the no small consternation of the family, she was again able to bustle and command; once more she took the lead, and ruled with her usual severity.

But the dismay thus occasioned, soon dissipated; her evil genius still prevailed, and, in spite of repeated warnings, again led her so often to her cabinet of cordials, as to produce a perpetual fever on her spirits, attended with other ailments, that fixed her in her great chair before mentioned, from whence she could only exhibit her former self, in the power of her lungs, which, indeed, appeared to have experienced no abatement. But, alas! of what avail was that power, without its former accompaniments? Dame Sympkins could no longer pursue her maids from chamber to chamber, and occasionally enforce obedience, by the

exercise of those natural weapons, denominated fingers, with nails at the end of them, in the free use of which, no personage in all the country round displayed more animated skill. No longer could she visit the stables, and drive from thence the idle drones she was sure to find there, wasting their time, and, to use a very familiar phrase of the decaying landlady, "Gulping down her liquor." No longer could she pay attention to the larder, and there daily examine that part of its stores, which was somewhat, another saying of her's, "On the go," and give her orders to Betty the cook to serve them up in the form of stews, hashes, and other ways, in which Betty was sure to prove herself a considerable adept, and by that means, enabled her thrifty mistress to make a show, when a bill was produced of the afore said chops, cutlets, kidneys, and other articles, which had lingered on the shelf beyond their appointed time, and thus created a scent, which but for such timely prevention, might have proved somewhat offensive to those discerning visitors, who occasionally looked in upon her well-formed display of fish, flesh, and fowl.

To add to her affliction, her dear Jack, since her illness, was no longer the man she once knew him. "No, no," said the altered woman to her cupboard cronies, "I see, I see how it is; it's all over with me; that artful Fan does as she pleases. But oh! if I could but stir about, I'd shew her the difference. It makes me shudder on my seat, that it does, to see, a

I have done, the fly glances that pass between her and my once kind husband, who used to be attentive and submissive, and, when I was put out of temper by my flirts about me, would keep his proper distance, and not suffer my consequence to be lessened—but God's will be submitted to, I say;—what can a poor creature, like me, do?—Yes, yes, they may laugh, and alack-a-day, they *will* laugh if they see me at any time take ever so small a *drap* of comfort;—and would you think it, my ungrateful and hard-hearted husband has sometimes the cruelty and the insolence to hold up an empty bottle to my face, and say, 'A good day's work, mistress,' when, wicked varlet as he is, he well knew he had taken the better part of it himself. But he knows, and well he knows, the vile ingrate, that I cannot rise from this chair; if I could, I'd shew him the difference, as I have done many's the time and oft. But I have been too gentle, too forbearing, and see what comes on't."

This, reader, is a specimen of those daily complaints, which the sick matron of the Castle used to utter to her gang of gossips, who always bestowed a hearing with Job's patience, and who, to give them their just due, always proved neither better nor worse than Job's comforters.

The complaint of Mrs Sympkins now rapidly gained ground, and, in time, the poor woman became so much weakened as to be utterly unable to exert herself, nor could all her

remonstrances prevail on her once submissive helpmate to turn away Fanny, for the extreme insolence she now daily experienced from that ungrateful and artful hussy, as she was pleased to term her.

Insult upon insult, at length, entirely subdued her spirits—Sympkins turned a deaf ear to every thing she had to say against his favorite, now but too publicly acknowledged; and for which partiality, so openly expressed, even his best friends as openly condemned him; for, with all her faults, Dame Sympkins had a real regard for her husband, and had evinced it in many a generous instance, even before marriage, when, but for such prompt and friendly aid, his name would have been entered in that black-letter list, which, twice a-week, makes its unwelcome appearance, to the utter dismay of the tottering tradesman, threatened by his neighbour's ruin.

The malady of the suffering woman rapidly increased, and soon gained its last and fatal station, the stomach. Not a servant in the house looked in upon her, as she sat moaning in her melancholy chamber, to which she was now ordered; her ill qualities *only* became the theme of conversation in the kitchen. Fanny took care to keep up the ball of detraction, and, when Sympkins, who was much liked for a species of dry humour he was ever displaying, to the diversion of his guests, appeared among them in the tap-room, a significant nod to the question, "How goes the old girl?"

succeeded by a simper from Fanny, was sure always to produce a hearty laugh, while the cup went round, "To the speedy deliverance of jolly Jack, and the future landlady." The truth was, Mrs. Sympkins, when she left the bar, did not leave the best of characters behind her, for civility or moderate charges.—Jack, who was reckoned a hearty fellow, and the reverse of his rib, never suffered in the opinion of his customers, for a conduct he always condemned, but dared not, till of late, presume to oppose.

The period, so much desired, at length arrived, when the doctor gave place to the undertaker, and Mrs. Sympkins was decently laid in her grave, to the entire satisfaction of her husband, who, in a few weeks, took Fanny to church, from whence she returned Mrs. Sympkins, the handsome mistress of the Castle.

CHAPTER II.

Ingratitude brings down its own Punishment.

FOR the space of six months, all was harmony and sunshine at the abode of the new married couple, but the event will prove that appearances are not always to be trusted.

In her union with Mr. Sympkins, Fanny had only studied her own interest. Any thing like affection for a person old enough to be her father, she could never think of entertaining ; in fact, she loathed his person, and despised his fondness. Her end obtained, she determined to confine herself to the study of ruling a husband she could not love, and to the art of gaining admirers.

Vanity was her ruling passion—it had been, and still was fated to prove her bane. She no longer exhibited the engaging smile and pleasing manner, that had formerly won upon all the domestics of the house, while she made one amongst them ; and all that seeming sweetness of disposition, so artfully assumed, and so well preserved till her aim was attained, she thought fit, consistently with the line of conduct she had drawn for the future, suddenly to relinquish.

The rapid and unlooked-for change gave much disgust to the deluded Sympkins. He found the business of his inn decreasing too perceptibly. The repulsive consequence and altered looks of its mistress soon drove the ordinary traveller from the house, where he no longer met the welcome he had been used to. All this the disappointed man deeply bewailed ; but, if he attempted to remonstrate, his present wife had her own way, though very different from that of his former, to put him to silence.

At the end of the first twelvemonth after

his imprudent marriage, Mr. Sympkins began to experience all its fatal consequences; his humor forsook him, and his downcast looks spoke the anguish of his mind. It was evident to all that Mrs. Sympkins considered him as an object of contempt; his own reflection forever upbraided him; he flew for relief to the means his first wife had taken, and, devoid of mind, or conduct, was never easy in himself, but when in a state of inebriation.

To account, in some measure, for appearances, certainly against her, on the part of Mr. Sympkins, towards the husband she had so improperly treated, it was soon whispered throughout the neighbourhood, the inhabitants of which gained the hint from her own servants, among whom remarks upon existing circumstances passed pretty freely, that the lady had cast a partial eye upon Mr. Goodwin, the new waiter, who had travelled into foreign parts, as an attendant upon a young nobleman, and who had returned every way completely qualified for the office he figured in.

Goodwin was in possession of a fine person, and had not yet seen his thirtieth year; his attention and civility, pleased all comers, and the contrast between this man and his master was certainly very striking. Poor Jack was no longer the jolly fellow he had been; his loud laugh and his free joke were no longer heard in the tap-room, where he, till of late, was wont to be the soul of the cause, when all was glee and merriment.

His present situation created severe reflection ; he felt mortified and dared not complain ; he could not but call to mind his own conduct towards his late partner, who had raised him from the brink of ruin, and how had she been repaid ? The thought, of how she had been hastened to an earlier grave than nature intended, and through *his* means, embittered his repose ; he was now sensible she had deserved better from his hands ; the crime of ingratitude stared him in the face, and he deeply experienced that punishment which is sure, sooner or later, to overtake those who forget benefits received, and who spurn their benefactors.

Providence, ever wise in its decrees, and just in its dispensations, now paid an awful visit to the repentant Sympkins. His lovely Fanny, as he was wont to call her, who could so well assume the mild endearing look, and the gentle persuasive manner, now, to the outrage of common decency and common gratitude, forbade him her presence, upon the plausible, and, in fact, too just plea, of his being in a constant state of stupid intoxication. What will not a few revolving months accomplish ? The look that pleased and the manner that won, were transferred in their transforming, but transitory course, from the dupe to her artifice, to the object of her love.

In the same chamber, and nearly in the same state with the wife he had hastened to her grave, did the erring and improvident Symp-

kins sit for hours, without a voice to cheer him, and for days, without a visit from her, who so easily could forget her duty, and set at nought every appearance she ought to have preserved. It was no longer the question in the tap-room, "Where's jolly Jack?" the visitors, now admitted there, observing the change exhibited in the fair and goodly mistress of the Castle, occasionally might say, "How's the poow fellow above stairs?" forgetful of the ready hand that, at free charge, had so often filled the reviving tankard, so often presented the friendly loan to the needy and stinted traveller! All these deeds were forgotten, and no circle, in court or city, could display meanness and duplicity, in a greater degree, than in the servile boundaries of the Castle.—Ingratitude is confined to no spot—The harpy exists in every form, and in every place.

It happened, in the dead of night, when all in the inn were folded in the arms of sleep, except its suffering master, who was stretched on a mean bed and in an obscure room, (the house on a public occasion being full of company,) racked with increasing agony of frame, and perturbation of mind, that his sufferings were heightened by an alarm of fire, which broke out in the stable, directly beneath his chamber. A ready supply of water, soon allayed its threatening aspect; but to stop its progress, and fully to subdue it, its opposing element was so plentifully showered upon the yielding casement of the sick man's apartment,

who, in the general tumult, was totally forgotten by every one, that it came in a deluge upon him, and he lay, for a long space, drenched and senseless. When he recovered, he found himself removed to another spot, and that some attention had been paid to him. For this he had to thank his old ostler, James ; who, luckily for his master, was grateful for kind offices, still remembered.

Through the carelessness of James it was, that the accident happened. The poor fellow, fatigued with a hard day's work, had gone to sleep on the straw, and had not properly secured his lanthorn. No sooner had alarm subsided, than he recollected that his old master lay in the room above.

He had served Mr. Sympkins from a child ; he sprung to his aid ; with proper assistance, he got him removed to a place more fitting for his deplorable state, and, when, the now dying Sympkins awoke from his swoon, he found the unfortunate James standing by him, and crying like a child, at the misery he had unwittingly occasioned.

With feeble accent, Mr. Sympkins enquired if he could see his wife, and was answered in the negative.

The late robust and healthful Fanny had now become a very fine lady, her natural affectation being much increased by the flattery to which her situation exposed her, and which she had lately experienced from several of her distinguished guests.

The doctor, willing to nurse a good patient, who had lately imagined herself afflicted with weak nerves, on the present occasion, intreated her to remain as calm as possible in her room. It was to this sage Galen that Sympkins put his question. The man of physic had been sent by his patient on the subject of enquiry concerning the poor wretch, as she termed her dying husband. Her messenger surveyed the shivering object before him, with an eye of indifference, and feeling his pulse, informed him, in a manner the most unqualified, that he was past all hopes of recovery.—Again the sick man exclaimed, “And cannot I see my wife, my Fanny?” To this question, put with a piteous accent, the doctor replied, that he must dispense with seeing his patient, as her nerves were greatly shaken, and that, in her present state, the sight of him might be attended with very serious consequences.

Mr. Sympkins glanced a look of reproach at his unfeeling visitor, and exclaimed in a sorrowful, tremulous, and feeble tone:—It is all as it should be; I am rightly served. Tell her, however, that I die in peace with all the world, and wish I could forgive myself, as freely as I do her unkindness. Tell her, I have not long to live; another day will probably make her her own mistress, and I pray you add, it is now my fervent wish to see her no more—the sight of her would only disturb my last moments.”

The unhappy man took a draught, sent him by the doctor, about an hour after that gentle-

THE BEGGAR BOY.

man had left him, and the obedient wife fully observed his last injunction.

James remained with his master till the moment of his release, and, ere the return of day, performed the last sad office!

CHAPTER III.

Marry in haste, (says the old adage,) and repent at leisure.

MRS. SYMPKINS, on being informed of the melancholy departure of her husband, refused not at ear; she bestowed upon his remains an expensive funeral, and did not become Mrs. Goodwin till those remains had rested a complete twelvemonth in their peaceful grave.

Previous to his marriage with the young and lovely widow, Goodwin, following that lady's example on a similar occasion, did not come forward in his own character till a certain time after the ceremony. Gentle as the summer breeze, weeks and months passed away, the happy pair were attentive to each other, and mutual satisfaction appeared to tranquillize their bosoms. It was Goodwin's resolve to remove his wife from that situation, where he had often beheld her attentive to those flattering nothings, which had rendered her vain and

assuming. To effect an end so needful to his repose, he fixed upon a day on which a party of young gentlemen had bespoke a dinner.— On this day he determined to exhibit the first display of a lordly husband. The time arrived, and, as usual, Mrs Goodwin appeared in the bar, arrayed in her best looks, and her best robes.

There she had long remained listening to the soft whisper of adulation which buzzed around her, when she was summoned away on pretended business. She found Mr. Goodwin in the parlour ; his look alarmed her, clouded as it was with a foreboding frown. After a short silence, which heightened her suspense, he told her, in a manner not the most gentle, and, indeed, perfectly new to her, that obedience was the bounden duty of every good wife—that her foible was not unknown to him, and that he found it an act of justice he owed to himself, to order her from that hour from the bar : “ You have not, madam,” he continued, “ to contend the case with me ; I am, I *will* be resolute—I am not a Sympkins. Retire to your sitting room ; there remain for the day—obey me and reply not.” Perceiving he was on the point of being disobeyed in the latter part of his charge, he thus interrupted the reply his alarmed partner was preparing—“ Mark me, madam, I have only to accuse you of excessive vanity, I believe your virtue unfilled. In acting as I do, I have no other motive than insure my own safety, and the ho-

nour of a thoughtless wife, which demands a guardian. I may appear abrupt, Mrs. Goodwin, but it is better, once for all, and to prevent altercation on your part, to tell you, my commands must ever be absolute, and that your duty consists in obedience."

Mr. Goodwin left the room, where Mrs. Goodwin did not think it prudent to wait her husband's return; overwhelmed with grief, wonder, and dismay, at a lecture so arbitrary, decisive, and unlooked-for; she deplored her destiny; she saw it would be vain to contend, and it required not the mystery of a *William* to tell her, the honey-moon was over.

The day passed on, distressing as her situation, present and future, appeared, without fits or faintings, on the part of the lady; who, taking her thoughts to council, very wisely concluded, any little artifice of that nature would only mar her cause, not mend it; and, after the unequivocal expressions she had heard, to her extreme consternation, from the person to whom she was bound for life, who is there, pretending to the smallest degree of prudence, but what would have acted precisely in the same manner as did the awakened Mrs. Goodwin?

From this period, the parties lived free from those little disputes, which frequently arise between those couples who may esteem themselves more happy; but where, as in the present instance, absolute sway is confined to one side, it must be allowed, that an end is completely put to *mutual* contention.

The removal of the handsome landlady from her bar became a nine-day's wonder ; but, scarcely had that wonder ceased, than another of far greater magnitude took place. Contrary to every hope he could possibly have formed, a very distant relation of Mr. Goodwin's dying without heirs, a very large fortune devolved to that respectable personage. Elevated by the sudden change, he instantly gave up his inn, threw away the napkin, and commenced *Gentleman* ; a part entirely new to him, and for the filling up of which he could not presume upon a single requisite. In this respect it only happened with Mr. Goodwin, as it has done with others like him, who have been unexpectedly raised from obscurity to affluence ; what chance had gratified on the one hand, nature had denied on the other.

One of his estates, for the property that devolved to him in houses and lands was immense, was within two miles of the Castle-Inn. Here, for a time, so prompted the low-born wish to lord it o'er his betters, he determined to fix his residence. The mansion was one of those fine old gothic structures, that appear to bid defiance to time itself ; but he had no sooner become an inmate than a rage for alteration took immediate possession of his mind, that now panted for distinction, but knew not how to obtain it.

The carpenter, the painter, the glazier, and the plumber were summoned with all dispatch from London ; each was the first man in his

way, and what to remove, and what to erect, became the important question. Having put their employer to as much expence as possible and rendered every thing complete, or in other words, destroyed the venerable and grand character of the edifice they attempted to improve, every man was departing to look after other concerns, when Mr. Goodwin expressed a wish to give the transformed building a *new name*. This proved a happy moment to Mr. Deputy Lump, the plumber, who saw *charming* situations, for certain images, and other decorative ornaments, about the house and grounds: he instantly received his orders, and, in less than a month, to the gaze and wonder of all the old women and children, were displayed the urn, the vase, the god and the goddess, in all their forms, sizes, and characters, at *Image Place*.

Mr. Goodwin was now in the possession of many good and comfortable things. But a large house, numerous domestics, showy equipage, and fine cloaths, could not procure a single mark of respect from those who still remained his superiors.

On his removal to Image Place, Mr. Goodwin had admitted his wife to occasional council and confidence. Their remaining in the midst of grandeur, without even a shadow of notice from any of the neighbouring gentry, excited mutual regret and surprize.

At length, a Miss Lucas, the daughter of the curate, who resided near them, and of

whom much will be said hereafter, paid them a visit. For while Mrs. Goodwin remained beneath the roof of a respectable mother, this young lady was her early friend and companion, and by her father's permission it was, that she now offered to renew the former intimacy.

Miss Lucas was an amiable and interesting character; and her excellent father had taken uncommon pains to cultivate a mind, which indulgent nature had not failed to embellish with its choicest ornaments.

In such a valuable friend, Fanny Roberts might have had a guide to preserve herself from error, and a pattern to consult in the regulation of her conduct, had not her excessive vanity and love of admiration hurried her to the imprudent measure of quitting the protection of her indulgent parent, and fixed her in a situation which effectually prevented farther intercourse, so long as she remained in it.

Miss Lucas, every former objection being removed, was a frequent visitor at Image Place; and while Mrs. Goodwin was engaged in listening to the dictates of her amiable and intelligent friend, Mr. Goodwin yawned away *his* hours at the Castle.

Here it was that he heard the character of Miss Lucas treated with so much freedom, that he went instantly home, and gave strict orders that Mrs. Goodwin should, at once, give up an acquaintance too hastily renewed.

This sudden prohibition little suited with the inclination of Mrs. Goodwin; but, by this time, she knew her husband's temper too well, to hesitate in obeying his injunctions.

CHAPTER IV.

Calumny Silenced.

MR. LUCAS, in the strictest sense, a for-
rowing widower, an affectionate father, and a
worthy man, attended, with no small degree
of concern, to his beloved child's account of
the indignity she had sustained at Image Place.

The daring calumny spread at the Castle,
was traced to its source, and the author called
to a severe account, by a gentleman of real in-
dependence and worthy pretension, at that
time a favored suitor, and who was determi-
ned to defend the character of a deserving young
woman, with whom he was on the eve of be-
ing united by the dearest ties of honor and af-
fection.

Mr. Goodwin, who had much enlarged up-
on what he had heard, and who had adopted
a freedom of speech and surmise every way un-
becoming, when he thought proper so rudely,
to banish from his house, a character much
too respectable to be seen there, now, sincere-

ly repented of his rudeness to the much injured daughter of the best of fathers and of men, when, to his utter dismay, he discovered that the unoffending object of his unmanly and unjust suspicion was not without a protector.

On a visit, which Mr. Neville, the gentleman just alluded to, paid at Image Place, he had fresh reason to detest the character of its upstart owner. He found that the general odium which prevailed against Mr. Goodwin was but too well founded, and that the hatred of the country people, of every rank and description, was no more than what he richly merited.

The conduct of the despicable Goodwin was servile in the extreme; every word he uttered betrayed the latent fear of a grovelling and corrupt heart, as he replied to certain spirited questions put to him by the indignant Neville, who insisted upon his just and well-founded demand—*public atonement*.

And public atonement was made, and that in the most degrading manner.

On the following day, and at a proper hour, the author of the scandal was pointed out by Goodwin thither led by the defender of injured innocence, in a full room at the Castle, where Mr. Neville but seldom appeared—that gentleman associated with a very different order of men. His character and his spirit were alike honorable, and alike known to all assembled. His look and manner too well displayed the purport of his errand to the dismayed ob-

ject of his just pursuit, who happened to be a man of wealth, not worth, and who had arrogance enough to assume, upon the strength of his great property, on which he ensured his own success, to ask, or rather demand, the permission of Mr. Lucas to renew his addresses to his daughter, after receiving from that young lady, a direct and pointed refusal.

The looks of Mr. Midford, the name of the worthless object of Mr. Neville's pursuit, betrayed his fear and confusion, even before the expected and dreaded question was put. When the charge was produced, and he was called upon, not for an answer, but a confession, he had no other resource but to avow his guilt, and, in terms the most humiliating, to solicit forgiveness; which was granted on no other condition, than that he would resign the cane he held, into the hand of the defender, not the vilifier, of female character. Trembling with apprehension, the calumniator gave up the instrument of punishment; but the forbearing, the generous Neville, made the most lenient use of his power: He glanced a look of reproach on Goodwin, and of ineffable contempt on the trembling and dastardly Midford, then placing across its owner, the weapon of chastisement, he threw it on the ground, and, amidst the general applause of all assembled, took his departure.

For a considerable time after this disgraceful circumstance to the author of a calumny, the most gross and unmerited, the gates of

Image Place were never passed by the common people, without some clamorous, and even violent display of their antipathy against the upstart owner.

Every thing has its appointed time ; to wipe away the stigma he had brought upon himself, the dismayed Goodwin become all at once extremely liberal to the poor—who, at first, such are the noble traits of an English spirit, accepted even his alms with a sullen aspect, which told him his motive was well understood ; but, as he continued to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, if he did not gain the public favor he thirsted after, he at least experienced, when he walked abroad, that murmurs became less and less audible ; and that, after a space, they entirely died away.

The disposition of Goodwin was sullen and revengeful ; the late humiliating circumstance rankled in his mind ; his poor wife became the object on whom he vented the effusions of his spleen ; she had witnessed too much, and he imagined he had beheld in her, since the hour of Mr. Neville's unwelcome visit, a manner he liked not, and a look, occasionally assumed, indicative of a secret triumph indulged at his expence.

Impressed with this idea, the unfortunate object of his suspicion experienced the effects of his displeasure, in a variety of ways. Vulgar, selfish, and unfeeling, he proved an adept in the art of tormenting ; and his conduct but too well displayed that, when and where he dared, he well knew how to act the tyrant.

Without the permission of her lordly governor, Mrs. Goodwin presumed not to venture beyond the limits of her own apartments; the servants too were encouraged to neglect her orders, and to treat her as a mere cypher. She saw no company; her mind had no resources within itself; and she could only sit, as was her daily practice, and lament the pleasant days when she was called "*Pretty Fanny of the Castle.*"

CHAPTER V.

Origin of Fanny Roberts.

ON the fifth year after her marriage with Mr. Roberts, the mother of Mrs. Goodwin was left a widow; and the untimely death of her husband, plunged the family he left behind him, into the deepest pecuniary distress.

Mr. Roberts had been one of those unthinking men, who enjoy the present, and look not to a future day. The salary attached to a small appointment, the unfortunate gentleman held under government, was sufficient, with economy, to have procured the necessaries, and even some of the comforts of life; but unhappily for Mr. Roberts, he sought after its luxuries; and obtained them at the expence of prudence, and even rectitude.

Unmindful of the exalted virtues of a wife the most amiable, regardless of an infant offspring, he suffered passion to overwhelm reason—he indulged in dangerous and forbidden pleasures, equally baneful to his health as to his fortune; and setting both at nought, rushed into excesses fraught with that ruin they never fail to produce.

—Loss of character (and is there one more fatal?) was succeeded by the loss of situation, the duties of which having been too repeatedly neglected to escape enquiry, Mr. Roberts received a severe reprimand, and was no longer considered as a fit object in whom to repose a trust, which there was but too good ground to imagine he would not fail at some time or other, to abuse, to the material injury of his employers, who, that they might not have occasion to regret their confidence, dismissed him with reproof justly merited, and disgrace wilfully incurred.

When too late, the every-way undone Roberts saw, and confessed his error. Demands he was unequal to, poured in on every side; means of support were exhausted; but he could only mourn his folly—the misery it had occasioned, was irremediable.

To look poverty in the face; to turn repentant to an insulted, and much injured wife; to repair, by reform and industry, the ills produced by error and crime, was an Herculean task; a task, indeed, to which the weak, lost,

and mistaken man, found himself every way inadequate.

In a situation thus forlorn and hopeless, conviction and despair planted their thorns in his harrowed and guilty bosom; his soul surged within him, and he trembled at the visions of his departed hours.

The worm of conscience thus at its destined work—character lost by misconduct—children cruelly neglected—a deserving and amiable wife plunged in misery—the poisonous breathing reproach—the future, gloomy, obscure and threatening—all, all conspire to render reflection intolerable—to distract a mind weakened by a long course of enervating pursuits, disowned by rectitude, and environed by inevitable ruin!

Alas! to thine own folly, a poor, deluded victim!—Was there no hope to cheer—no God to pardon? What can be said of thee, and others like thee, who close the dark history of a life mispent, by the commission of that deed, from which appalled nature shrinks with horror, and to which, so runs the general sentence, the door of repentance is closed forever!

Here, over human frailty, let the tear be shed—the curtain drawn! The world is severe—may heaven be merciful!!!

If the justice of the pious Lucas, a minister of his God, is to be called in question—if from his representation, through which the remains of a poor unfortunate were laid in con-

scandal ground, to prevent that disgrace which an unfeeling world might entail upon his offering—to prevent the widow's heart from being wrung with added torture, he is judged by fellow-men guilty of a fault, in the great day of retribution, when human error will no more be repeated, and every heart laid open—happy, and thrice happy, those who have no more to answer for!

After the interment, the afflicted widow took to her chamber, and for several days refused sustenance, or comfort; but, when reason returned to the seat from whence it had been driven by calamity, almost without an example, and religion had consoled her bosom with its never-failing balm, her children were brought to her couch of suffering, thither led by the best of men and of ministers.

This was the moment chosen by the excellent, the friendly Lucas. His potent arguments were listened to with that attention they could not fail to create; strictly consonant with the dictates of the sacred page whence they were drawn, every sentiment he uttered strengthened the reviving heart of the widow, the while it pleaded, in accents persuasive and irresistible, the cause of those innocents, who except herself, had none to help them.

Days, months, and years elapsed, and as they passed, a uniform discharge of a christian, and a mother's duty, enabled Mrs. Roberts to look up, to survive her trials, and to be comforted.

As her infant charge advanced in years, it was not without the deepest concern that Mrs. Roberts observed the striking contrast in the dispositions of her two children. Her daughter, Fanny, was uncommonly beautiful, fond of praise, artful beyond her years, and of a narrow turn of mind, which on every occasion failed not to prove too palpably, that self was the first object of consideration.

Not so with the little James, who on the contrary, was generous to excess; sensible, dutiful, and affectionate.

Often would he converse on the situation of his widowed parent, in a manner that never failed to moisten with the dew of manly sensibility, the eyes of his more than father, the humane, the worthy Lucas; who already beheld in this interesting and uncommon boy, the future hero.

To all his lessons, furnished by his reverend, and revered, tutor, James bestowed the strictest attention; but to those, relative to his future destination, the sea, he became so peculiarly attached, that it never was without some difficulty he was drawn from them, to indulge at the stated hours in those recreations, so natural, and so necessary for youth to be engaged in, for the preservation of their health, and relaxation of their mind.

The family of the reverend Mr. Lucas was but small; it consisted of himself, his daughter and a maid servant, and Fanny Roberts was a very great favorite with them all.

It was with painful sensations, that Mrs.

Roberts discovered her own partiality towards her offspring; a partiality, which day by day gained strength, as she contemplated the every word and action of her engaging, her affectionate boy. This preference she endeavoured to check, but it would not be; circumstances continually set before her the strong contrast between her children; and the feelings that contrast gave rise to, how vain every effort to suppress!

In the midst of those reflections, which were ever uppermost in her mind, if Mr. Lucas made his appearance, as was not unfrequently the case, the sorrowing lady would say, "My darling James, worthy Sir, is never happier than when attending to your instructions; and, as on your part, you wish him ever with you, it is every way fitting I should comply with a thankful heart! were it otherwise, I, perhaps, might forget my girl, and ungratefully imagine I had but one comfort."

A humble curate of a country village, for Mr. Lucas held no higher rank in the church, of which he was so good a partner, and so worthy a member, he had it not in his limited power to do what Mr. Lucas was in the daily practice of doing; but he acted as a humane and faithful steward, for one whose liberal donations accompanied his own mite; and well was he said of this ornament to the faith and station he held, that, "He filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he sent empty away." His gate was ever open to the lowly;

and the friendless ; while the unfeeling and the arrogant presumed not to enter therein.

The noble independence of such a mind was revered by his relation and dearest friend, Admiral Sydney, who, every revolving summer, was sure to be his guest.

The admiral had lost a limb, while engaged for the honour, the safety, and the welfare of his country ; for which he felt as a genuine patriot and a determined guardian.

CHAPTER VI.

The Subject Continued.

THE brave Sydney beheld, or imagined he beheld, in the boy James, a spirit which would eventually lead its owner to honor and renown ; and his early propensity for a profession, the art of which he was studying with unremitting ardor, ensured to him, on a future day, the admiral's support and friendship.

The admiral had seen forty years active service, when his misfortune doomed him, in the fifty-eighth winter of his days, to pass it in a state of painful and dangerous confinement.

The deck of honor had been the station in which his patriot heart gloried ; on every occasion that called his spirit forth—there he had

uniformly displayed its noble daring—and there he met with that accident, which, at length, stopped his career of well-earned glory. But victory medicined every regret, succeeded by a peace, honorable to the natives, and which, to speak figuratively, placed another gem in the diadem of its monarch.

Like his kinsman Lucas, the admiral had an only daughter, who constantly resided with her aunt, a woman of the first fashion in London, and whose manners but little accorded with his own.

Not altogether satisfied with his child's guardian, he often expressed his earnest wish, that his life might be prolonged, till he could see that child settled for life.—“I like not,” he would frequently say, “the example my sister sets her altogether; and yet, where can I place her better than with so near a relation? May Heaven prolong my days, till a protector is ensured, by an union with a worthy object; till then, she is surely better with a father than without one.”—These observations were always accompanied with a deep sigh, expressive of something more than he thought fit to express, and which seemed to weigh heavy upon his heart.

Miss Sydney, the aunt of Louisa, was a fine lady, and younger than her brother by twenty years. In the early part of her life, she was celebrated for her personal accomplishments, which she possessed in a very high degree; and, although time will mark its pro-

gress, she still remained lovely and alluring, at least so said the world of splendor and dissipation. Her superb mansion in Grosvenor Square, was considered as the Temple of Taste, where the votaries of dress and dissipation daily assembled. There, time flew on downy wings, and there, poor Louisa lost all that sweet simplicity which had marked her infant years, ere she was deprived of the best of mothers.

Louisa Sydney was of an elegant form, and her countenance beamed with beauty and intelligence. Her aunt was very assiduous in giving her instructions how to figure in those polite and brilliant assemblies, which continually graced her drawing-room; of which, it was her boast to the admiral, his daughter was a conspicuous ornament.

Every winter, the worthy Sydney paid his sister a visit of two months; but he resolutely refused to make one at any of her routs or to sit large sums at her numerous card parties.

Many altercations arose between the brother and sister, on the subject of the young lady's allowance; which, although sufficiently ample to answer every reasonable demand, Miss Sydney strongly urged, was by no means adequate to the sphere she moved in. Such arguments interspersed with suitable remarks on her birth and expectations, were sure to subdue a fond and partial parent; and every year, additional pleas were sure to be set up, and never failed to produce the effect intended.

The truth was, Louisa had unhappily imbibed a passion for gaming; her losses were at times, very considerable; and for which her gains never compensated. Her almost uniform run of ill luck would sometimes render her uneasy; but on these occasions, her aunt would silence her complaints, by expressing a hope (how often proved fatal and delusive!) that "fortune would change."

The unhappy propensity of Louisa towards a practice so destructive, induced her to adopt plans, prompted by her aunt, to deceive her best, her only friend, in order to enable her to discharge debts, not of honor, but of infamy.

To a delicate ear, the term may convey a harsh sound; but duly considered, in what light are such demands to be received?—Demands, entailed upon the imprudent and unsuspecting, at tables, where our gentry and nobility descend to the meanest arts, and, in defiance of common honesty and common feeling, plunder those who, allured by specious appearances, suspect not deceit; and that sharpers of the worst description, are those who pursue their work of ruin beneath the dazzling disguise of rank and title.

Whenever the admiral was applied to by Miss Sydney for the supplies before-mentioned, Louisa was always sure to be absent; giving as her reason her great dislike to any conversation respecting "money matters." This her aunt attributed to the spirit of a gentlewoman;

and her father agreed with her in the wish, that, in that particular, the dear girl might never be found deficient.

But, from this boasted spirit how materially did she swerve, when anxiety to learn the result of Miss Sydney's rhetoric, thus practised on her father, induced her to remain hid in an adjoining chamber, from whence, on her parent's departure, she would issue forth with the question "How have you succeeded with the old gentleman?"

From his latter visits to his sister, the admiral always returned thoughtful and dejected; but the attentions of his family and those of his reverend friend, dissipated by degrees the gloom that overwhelmed him.

The innate goodness of heart, the invaluable qualities of which displayed themselves to the observant ken of the father of Louisa in repeated instances, since the acquaintance commenced between them, confirmed him in his friendship for the amiable Lucas. He found him, at the commencement of their acquaintance, supporting himself and his family, with a decency becoming the sacred character he held, upon the miserable yearly pittance of thirty-five pounds. He saw that his delight consisted in doing good to the utmost his means, so shamefully confined, would permit, and that from the little he possessed, he still found wherewithal to assist the unfortunate.

At the humble dwelling of religion, peace and rectitude, he met with the character he

had long been in search of; he met with a scholar, a divine, and a gentleman, in the person of the village curate—namely he had a worthy claim to; for, at home and abroad, he preserved an unbounded display of their manners.

The friendly union had not subsisted many months, before the admiral, having made several iterations in his mansion, requested the company of Mr. Lucas and his daughter, to spend a day with him at Sydney-Grove, in order that they might view his improvements, displayed in the house, and about his grounds, which were picturesque and extensive. After passing away the hours, which flew unmarked till towards the evening, his visitors proposed a return to their more humble home. "Not," says the admiral, "before my ever honored, ever welcome guest, has seen my *Cottage*. Permit me to say, I prize my cottage before all I've done yet; come, let us mend our pace—you must see it ere we depart."

They ascended a verdant and gently rising hill, where numerous cattle were browsing upon the herbage; nothing could exceed the tranquillity which reigned around the happy party. "This scene," exclaimed Mr. Lucas, "reminds us of the serenity enjoyed from youth to age, by those, whose lengthened lives are recorded in the sacred page of everlasting truth, and whose existence was thus prolonged, that they might view their children, and their children's children, flourish as the graceful palm in the land of their inheritance."

From the summit of the hill, its descent lay through a well-planted wood, the several windings of which appeared to rival each other in picturesque allurements, spread, as if to bewilder the enchanted wanderer, in his choice of which to fix on for his farther progress.

The party had not advanced far into this wild and beautiful seclusion, before the sound of a fall of water led them to the spot from whence it proceeded.

From an eminence, equal to the surrounding trees of the highest growth, the eye had to contemplate a grand and natural cascade, which discharged its perpetual torrent into a basin, which embellished the glade beneath.

Here, seated on a rustic bench, composed of the roots of trees, they viewed the liquid torrent, as it fell from stage to stage, till it gained its extensive and circular bed, the embankment of which was studded with flowers of every hue, form, and character.

The party, lost in interesting and social converse, remained on their seat till the rays of the setting sun no longer glittered on the foaming liquid. The spray, which, from many a statue, had reflected its glowing tints, appearing to the enraptured beholders, as animated sands of gold, in all the variety of dyes which marks the shining ore, was no longer thus illuminated; and the increasing shades of evening induced their conductor to say, "We have viewed as fine a sight as the human eye can dwell on, and five minutes walk from the

cottage I have reared, will at all times lead us
 that; there let us conclude our pleasing day,
 and conclude it with a wish, that we may yet
 experience many, equally happy, equally se-
 vere!"

When the admiral and his company were
 seated in the cottage, they beheld from a pro-
 jecting window, a small, but enchanting gar-
 den. A stream from the cascade ran through
 it, laving as it passed, the plants it nourished.

After some time spent in surveying the
 different parts of the ground-floor of this se-
 cluded paradise, the admiral, turning to Mr.
 Lucas, said, "Forgive me, Lucas, but here I
 must leave you; and leave you, my best, my
 dearest friend, in an abode you must hencefor-
 ward call *your own*. Pardon the deception I
 have practised. This building, which I pray
 you to believe is reared at a very trifling ex-
 pence, and has more conveniences which you
 stood in absolute need of, than that you have
 left this morning, and to which you cannot
 now return; as, thanks to three or four of my
 good domestics, who love to execute their
 master's will, even to its minutest letter, it is
 now cleared of all its furniture, which I trust
 you will find arranged to your liking in the
 chambers above. I know you will forgive me,
 and consider this library, the shelves of which
 are furnished with authors of which I had du-
 plicated, our mutual property. Here we shall
 hereafter, frequently meet and hold our wonted
 converse. The *parlor* commanding a

THE BEGGAR BOY.

complete view of your little garden, which runs shelving to the stream, you have nothing to do with ; it is furnished for your good, your amiable daughter ; and there you must come as her *visitor* ; I believe she will have none more welcome."

Here Miss Lucas arose, and, in a manner the most respectful and engaging, took the hand of the admiral and raised it to her lips ; then advancing to the seat of her father, she fell on her knees ; at the same moment, her parent sunk from his chair, and clasped to his grateful bosom his dear, his valuable child !—The admiral surveyed them for a time, then wiping away the falling tear from his manly face, he thought of Louisa ! With an exclamation of—"heaven's blessings ever encompass you !" he took his departure from the seat of rural elegance, and returned to Sydney-Grove ; revolving in his mind, on his way thither, the contrast between his own child and that of his esteemed, and, in that material instance, his more fortunate friend.

It would indeed prove a vain task, to attempt picturing the feelings of Mr. Lucas and his daughter on the present occasion. The next morning the admiral looked in at their breakfast hour ; they made an effort to express the thanks they could not utter ; the admiral said he had but one request to make, which was, that he might hereafter be considered as the party under obligation.

The birth-day of Miss Lucas happened on

the first week of her father's removal to his new and romantic habitation. The admiral requested to be their guest, and at his desire, the building received the name it went by, from that day of rational and chaste felicity. It was called *The Curate's Cottage*; and no traveller ever passed it, without being struck with the taste and original character of the edifice and its enchanting boundaries, although destitute of the decorations of Mr. Deputy Lump, displayed in such profusion at *Image-Place*.

CHAPTER VII.

The Subject Concluded.

THE admiral's munificence did not end with his gift of the cottage. In a manner equally disinterested, and equally unknown to the party till the noble deed was done, were the sums of two hundred a year, settled on Mr. Lucas, and one hundred a year on his daughter.

When young Roberts, to whom we now return, had attained the proper age, he was fitted out as a midshipman; he gloried in his destination, and his only wish was, that his ardor in the cause he was engaged in, might speedily be put to the trial.

With a bosom glowing with hope and expectation, he embarked, and, ere long, his wishes were fully accomplished. The captain of the frigate he went in returned with a prize, and nothing could exceed the praises he bestowed on his brave little James.

With his share of the prize-money, James purchased a life-annuity for his mother; an act of attention and of duty that still rendered him, if possible, a greater favorite than ever among his friends, and all to whom he was known in the village of Auburn, where his acquaintance chiefly consisted of those whose poverty or misfortunes had come within his knowledge, and which he had been in the habit of relieving, as far as the pocket allowance furnished by Mr. Lucas and the admiral would permit.

It was at this period, the admiral received intelligence of the sudden death of a near relation, to whom he was heir at law. The residence of the deceased lay in a distant part of South Wales, and there the presence of the reluctant Sydney was indispensable.

The admiral took an unwilling and affectionate leave of those, whom circumstances had rendered so dear to him. Regret on both sides was mutual; and after his departure, a gloom appeared to hang over every scene which had, from situation, character, or beauty, attracted particular attention, in the course of the late rambles of the happy and amiable society.

To add to affliction for the absence of the best of friends, James Roberts was again summoned to his duty ; in the performance of which, the brave and undaunted youth failed not to gain the laurel he sought for ; but it was not, as before, accompanied with an increase of fortune.

Though many a weary mile divided the admiral from those for whom he cherished the most pure and disinterested friendship, his imagination was still on the stretch to render them service. His little hero, as, while yet a boy, he was wont to call Mr. Roberts, and who was now at home with his mother and sister, was ever, next to his Louisa, uppermost in his thoughts. An occasion now presented itself, and the young man felt every hope gratified in his appointment to the command of a frigate. He had then attained his twenty-third year ; and the navy could not boast of a better seaman, and a finer gentleman, than Captain Roberts.

The admiral, in his letter to Mr. Lucas, regretted exceedingly the necessity he was under to pass many summers away from his favorite retreats ; retreats, where he was once embosomed in the paradise of reciprocal friendship and regard. He sincerely expressed his good wishes for Mrs. Roberts. Fanny was not forgotten, in his affectionate and affecting epistle ; he sent her his blessing, accompanied with a wish, that, during the absence of her brother, she would consider the anxiety of her worthy

and indulgent parent, and act the part of a child and a comforter.

Previous to his taking his final leave of his widowed mother, Captain Roberts made use of every argument to persuade Fanny to remain at home. Fanny appeared convinced she could never meet with a better friend than she had ever found there; and gave him her promise to comply with his wish; but alas! that promise was only given to silence those admonitions which she liked not to attend to; for, at the moment it was given, she determined to break it the first opportunity that presented itself, when her monitor was away, and she could no longer be subject to his reproaches.

Not aware of her covert intention, as a kind and affectionate brother, he promised, when fortune put it in his power, to render her independent of all, except their mutual parent; and hoped he should ever have to own her as a deserving and worthy sister. Tears would force their way, as he pressed her to his anxious bosom, and cried—"Consider, Fanny, our dear, our blessed mother, will now have every need of such consolation as you alone can bestow, It is with you to create her happiness or her misery! Beware then how you execute your appointed task! Beware how you disturb a mind, so much in your own keeping! O may I find on my return, a mother happy, and sister every thing she ought to be!"

Fanny again promised to obey his injunctions; but, from her manner, which expressed

no regret on parting, the mind of Roberts augured what his tongue forbore to utter. At this moment her mother, dissolved in tears, made her appearance; he rushed to her maternal, her last embrace; he repaired at once to his station, which he reached on the dawn of the following day. While on the road, his own musings were his melancholy companions; assured as he was, that his sister was destitute of those proper feelings, which adversity alone could produce.

His predictions were indeed soon verified. A twelvemonth had not passed since the departure of her brother, when Fanny Roberts took occasion again to express her dislike to the dull and unmeaning manner of passing away her time, with one who never visited or saw company at her own house. Miss Lucas, it was true, often looked in; but indeed that young lady's serious turn was not at all times pleasing.

This unsettled turn of mind in her wayward child, proved to the unfortunate mother, a source of extreme affliction; and at this period to increase her fears and augment her anxiety, Miss Roberts thought proper to form a fresh intimacy with a young person, niece to Mr. Symkitts of the Castle-lin, and who was there on a visit. This was a very improper acquaintance; but remonstrance and persuasion were alike in vain; and with her new companion Fanny passed the better part of her time.

In one of those visits to Miss Sympkins, the lure was thrown out, that at once determined this wayward victim of a stubborn will, to break through every barrier that might impede her flight from duty, and herself.

The ill health of Mrs. Sympkins, frequently obliged that good woman to keep her room ; and her husband had expressed a wish that his niece would, on these occasions, take her place at the bar. A proposal had been sent to the father, by whom it was rejected, on the score of his daughter's being wanted at home.

This refusal was a subject that created a mutual disappointment between the parties, and which they were regretting when Fanny looked in upon them, as was now her constant practice, to take a cup of tea.

Perceiving her companion to look more serious than usual, she enquired the cause, which was no sooner explained, with a " Now's your time, my dear, to break your fetters, and escape from unpleasant controul," than Fanny at once agreed to quit her mother, and preside at a handsome salary, at the head of affairs, during the unavoidable absence of the mistress of the Castle.

This removal was not only much against the will of her mother, but directly contrary to the advice of Mr. Lucas, who represented how much more consistent and eligible it would be in every respect, to wait till her brother should again return, before she thought of any change in her situation.

A deaf ear was turned to every thing these real friends could urge ; she was determined on leaving the house of her parent, but the measure of that parent's woes was not yet full ; she was to experience another trial—but, alas ! not sustain it.

The autumn of the year, in which her capricious child had left her alone and comfortless, proved very inauspicious to those whose lot had cast them upon the “great waters.” Not a print of the day appeared, without some afflicting intelligence to wring the heart of many a fond parent, besides herself.

The apprehension of a loss so fatal proving her own lot, and of which even the next day's journal might give her horrid assurance, prevented sleep from closing her eye-lids, during the lingering and painful hours of night, which she passed trembling with suspense, and longing for, and yet dreading the return of another morning.

It had been a custom with Mr. Lucas to send the newspaper, which he received daily, to Mrs. Roberts instantly on its appearance. The morning at length arrived when he failed in that particular. The circumstance flashed terrible conviction on the sinking heart of his widowed neighbour ! who met him at the door of his cottage, at the moment he was preparing to quit it.—His mournful aspect explained every thing, told her, her fears were realised, and that she no longer owned a son ! Still she put the agonizing question—silence confirmed

all ! " He is gone ! " she uttered—" The will of heaven be done ! "

This exclamation was succeeded by a fainting fit, followed by strong convulsions. The friendly Lucas, in evident alarm, hastened forward and speedily returned with proper assistance. The doctor, when the convulsions subsided, in a state of insensibility, gave it as his opinion, that the heart of his patient was broken ; that no mortal aid could possibly relieve her, and that a few hours must terminate her existence.

The poor sufferer lay for a time speechless. Her daughter having heard the afflicting circumstance, came with a request to see her mother, and implore her forgiveness. She approached the bed whereon, for some hours, the dying lady had lain senseless and silent—she took the hand of her parent, who turned her eyes upon her—uttered a faint scream, and instantly expired !

The last emotion of the departed sufferer appeared deeply to affect her weeping daughter, who hung over the insensate corse, and with deep drawn sighs, surveyed its livid features. In vain she called upon the parent she had offended. With that parent, every sorrow was hushed to eternal sleep ! The frame she contemplated was no more to be shaken by human ills ! Another pang would never torture its heart, now still in its place—another tear would never impearl its eye, now closed forever !

After the interment of her mother, Fanny

Roberts remained near a month with Mr. Lucas and his daughter; by that time her tears were dried up, and her grief, at the first violent, rapidly subsided. On her return to the Castle, her spirits were no longer depressed; and when her marriage took place with Sympkins, Mr. Lucas could only regret what he could not prevent. Her situation rendered her an improper acquaintance for his daughter; and it was not till the event happened, which removed her to Image-Place, that the acquaintance was renewed, as already described, with the consequences it produced.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Discovery.

HAVING given every particular, needful to be recorded of Fanny Robers, in her single state, and during the short life of her first husband, to whom her conduct will not bear justification, we now continue her history, with her second, who has hitherto displayed a very different disposition from that of his predecessor, to the no small disappointment and discomfiture of the lady.

But the moment is now at hand, which is to

check his high career, and curb that authority of which he has made such an ill use.

Sitting one morning at breakfast, in one of those humours which had so often made the much altered Mrs. Goodwin tremble with apprehension, the lordly owner of Image-Place received a letter, the contents of which were to the following purport.

“ *Goodwin,*

“ Brother I must not call you, till I see how you merit that title—Inform my still dear sister Fanny, I am living—and tell her at the same time, that I can, and will see her happy, if wealth and means can contribute toward a purpose so near my heart. The man who presumes to treat her unkindly must account to me for his conduct.—Within two days from the receipt of this, expect to see

“ *James Roberts.*”

Having read the letter, Mr. Goodwin trembled, turned pale, and rising from his chair, walked to the window, as if desirous of concealing his agitation. The late visit of Mr. Neville was still festering in his memory; and his feelings at the present moment exemplified the observation passed upon him by that spirited defender of injured worth, that “ a tyrant is ever a coward.”

At length, somewhat recovering himself, he returned to his seat, saying, “ This letter, my dear, is from a person you could but little ex-

well to hear from; and yet it comes, or I am much deceived, from the dearest friend you ever knew."

The manner, the look of her husband, the altered speech, the confusion, under which, in spite of every effort to conceal it, he laboured, emboldened Mrs. Goodwin to reply in a strain he had been for a length of time a stranger to. "I once imagined," said that lady, "that in such a light I should have to regard the person now before me. However, Sir, if at any time I have been dear to any, and then it would have been the deepest ingratitude to entertain a doubt, it was to a mother and a brother, now in a state of eternal happiness. The latter Mr. Goodwin, was a brave young man; had he been living, it is probable I might, as your wife have received better treatment, than has hitherto fallen to my lot. But I have now only to recollect the warnings I improperly spurned—and lament, as I do in bitterness of heart, that folly which has rendered me completely wretched."

"It seems, madam," said Goodwin, after a long pause, "as if you already anticipated the contents of this paper, which indeed I have no right to withhold from your inspection. Believe me, I have only one wish; and that is to meet the party in a manner becoming the relationship between us. But if you look for a champion, Mrs. Goodwin, you will there find you have one."

Without waiting a reply, he arose and left

the room and the letter in the possession of the lady.

On perusing the brief, but spirited epistle of her brother, wonder, joy, and gratitude, took possession of her heart. She wept; while feelings, to which she had hitherto remained a perfect stranger, possessed her wholly. Lost in nameless rapture, instinctively, she dropped on her knees; while her lips poured forth the effusions of prayer for offences past, and praise for present good.

With the important paper held closely to her beating heart, did she remain till Mr. Goodwin, in a state of mind, widely different from that of his wife, after taking a turn or two in the garden to compose his spirits, thought fit to return.

Hearing his step in the gallery Mrs. Goodwin arose, and seated herself in her chair, in which situation she was found by her husband.

After a short silence on either side, and assuming a smile too apparently studied, Mrs. Goodwin was preparing to address the person he was conscious he had treated unworthily; when that insulted and ill-treated person interrupted him, and completed his confusion, by saying, "I, certainly, Sir, shall accept the *champion's* services; have you any objection to make against so brother-like, so spirited, so generous an offer?"

Unable to struggle with his embarrassment, he hesitated for a few seconds; and then, with a full display of abject and inherent cunning,

which ignorance, ingrafted in his nature, forbade him to hide, he thus replied to the question. "From this moment, my business, let it be our endeavours to forget the past; and may all animosity be buried in oblivion! I sincerely hope my real affection has never been doubted; we cannot always account for temper; but let my dearest life rest satisfied, that I am not less rejoiced at the unexpected return of her brother, than she can possibly be herself."

Does the conduct of the selfish and artful Goodwin require explanation? Certainly not!

He well remembered having heard his wife say, that, "Had James Roberts been alive, she would have no need to appear as she had done, since her confinement in Image-Place; and that what a husband's parsimony withheld, a brother's generosity would have supplied."

While Goodwin was no more than landlord of the Castle Inn, situation, and a too frequent assemblage of former acquaintance, led him, in their company, to neglect his business, and dissipate his time; and he suspected not the ruin that awaited him, as he might have done, till he became involved in its vortex.

But, when he came to the possession of the immense estates of his very distant, and, indeed, forgotten relation, in so unexpected a manner as has already been related, he looked down upon every one he had formerly known, and sought, unqualified as he was, in every requisite for such an attempt, the company of his betters.

In their circles, he did not meet with the respect he looked for ; and the late disgraceful event at the Castle, had induced him to seek for amusement in examining his steward's accounts. This mode of employment by no means suited with the inclination of that *bonnet* gentleman, who had of late years been in the habit of managing so much in his own way, that he did not consider the inspection of a second person altogether convenient, till proper alterations were here and there effected ; but as the good man saw no remedy, he made up his mind to certain inquiries that might be made, and prepared himself accordingly.

The education of Goodwin had led him to the knowledge of debtor and creditor ; and there, in truth, it ended. That knowledge, however, confined as it was, enabled him to discover several abuses practised by the *trust* greybeard of his late relation ; and that his pages of expence and receipt were capable of considerable improvement on his side of the question in future.

His remarks, however unwelcome, were listened to by Mills, who acknowledged his errors, wherever they were pointed out ; bowed assent to all his master advanced ; promised obedient attention in future ; and thus, as many of his tribe have done in similar situations, he submitted to a reprimand, and preserved his place.

In his household too, Mr. Goodwin soon dis-

expences which he deemed superfluous; many of his servants were dismissed as useless; and he was determined to confine even Mrs. Goodwin's expences to her absolute wants alone; and if, at times, that lady was allowed to utter a word upon the occasion, his reply would be—"Are not your wants daily supplied?—What more would you have?—Is not every thing *mine*?—No, no, woman, you have only wasted my means, but never added to them. Your mother, indeed might have left you pocket-money; but she was thrifty, and at least she meant to be so; it was not her intention to have the worst of the bargain; she might have lived upon the interest and preserved the principal; but that was not her wish; her meaning was to live as long as possible, and it was well known she cared for no one but herself."

Conduct such as this, if explained at full, Mrs. Goodwin was well aware could not possibly do to his advantage. He had every reason to expect in Captain Roberts, from the tenor of his letter, or rather note, a man firm to his purpose, and not to be trifled with. He knew too well, that since she became his wife, Mrs. Goodwin had been no expence to him; and that his reproaches, lately made to her, of "wasting his means, and never adding to them" were at once unjust and ill-founded; on the contrary, he had run through all she brought him at the Castle; and but for the late unexpected turn of fortune, his former impro-

demerits would have reduced her to the lowest state of distress. His reflections too on Mrs. Roberts, were at once groundless and indelicate, and such as would, if mentioned, bring down the resentment of her son.

Thus situated, it required all the cunning he was master of, and that was no small share, to ward off the blow that threatened him. In this dilemma, and the enemy at the gate, he had no other resource than to act the mean and despicable part he had done.

On the arrival of Captain Roberts, Goodwin had prevailed on his wife, on the promise of an entire reformation, to contradict, or soften, so many of the reports which had been raised against him that no other consequence attended their meeting, than a *distance*, which gradually wore off on the part of the manly and generous Roberts, who was truly an honor to society, and worthy of having his name enrolled among the bravest and the best of men, who are at once the glory and the boast of Old England.

Captain Roberts could not boast of a finished education ; but, from his early entrance into life, from the connections he had formed, and from his amiable and irreproachable manners, which had won upon his superior officers, he had been enabled to acquire a degree of knowledge he would not otherwise have possessed, and a penetration which outstripped the years he yet had numbered.

The reception he experienced at Image-

Place was so strongly descriptive of the respect its owner was so anxious to display towards his new relation, that it is no wonder, such is the strong charm attendant upon attention and flattery, artfully disguised, that his resentment so lately meditated, was entirely subdued, and the inquiries he intended to have made, totally relinquished.

From the moment of the appearance of the young seaman, he became the admiration of all the domestics in the family ; and, as every hour he rose in their good opinion, so likewise, in a proportionate degree, did the influence of their hitherto penurious and tyrant master become less and less. With all his caution, with all his management, Goodwin could not disguise *himself* ; the altered dress ; the sudden and perfect freedom of their long neglected mistress ; the housekeeper's increasing, but unquestioned accounts ; the great deference paid to the noble captain—displayed only in colours still more glaring, the bad materials of which the weathercock mind was formed, that could so readily turn from one extreme to the other.

CHAPTER IX.

A Visit to the Curate's Cottage.

WITH all the anxiety of a long-absent brother, intent upon the welfare of a sister, the erring, still beloved, Captain Roberts had made every enquiry at the different stages, during his last day's journey, respecting the man with whom her fortunes and her fate were now united. Reports had come to his knowledge not greatly in his favour, and which occasioned the letter which had been the cause of much anxiety to Goodwin. The nearer he advanced towards the place of his abode, every thing he listened to, tended still more and more to confirm them.

On his arrival at Auburn, his first visit was to the grave of his mother. That melancholy duty paid, he repaired to the cottage, there to unburthen his full heart, and hear in return every interesting particular respecting his revered, his lamented parent, and of his imprudent and ill-advised sister; for the wealth of Goodwin was of no moment to him, if he could not respect the *man*.

In his hopes of seeing Mr. Lucas and his daughter, he experienced a disappointment—they were from home, on a week's visit, a few miles distant. Thus disappointed in the intelligence he wished to have gained, previous to

his entering the boundaries of Image-Place, he had no other resource than to repair thither, and gather information from appearances, as he might happen to find them.

On the fourth day after his being there, he received a pressing invitation from Mr. Lucas, who was just returned from his visit, to pass the following day at the cottage. The company of his sister was also desired by Miss Lucas, in which that young lady was most cordially joined by her father.

In different conversations held with his sister on the subject of her present situation, he found she had experienced enough to render her very unhappy; and, though each circumstance was unfolded by degrees, and with a caution that reflected great credit on the forbearance of the relator, still it was with difficulty the hearer could subdue that resentment they occasioned. One consolation, however, and that a very material one, he drew from her painful history; which was, that adversity had cured her of self-conceit, and improved the qualities of a heart they failed not to meliorate.

During their morning walk in the garden, Captain Roberts expressed to his sister his surprise, that the worthy friend of his indigent childhood, and to whose goodness he stood indebted for all he possessed, should not in his invitation include her husband, as well as herself.

In her explanation why he should not, Mrs. Goodwin had to unfold a tale, which she wished

to have suppressed; and which militated so much against her husband, that it required, by her persuasion, to calm the perturbation it had occasioned in the breast of her indignant auditor, who expressed in stronger terms than any he had yet made use of, his detestation and abhorrence of Goodwin's injustice, meanness, and duplicity.

On their return to the house, he desired his sister would dress for her visit; and, on the present occasion, without consulting her husband.—“Should he make enquiry,” said the captain, “Where you are going, tell him it is at my request you accompany me on a visit to a family that shall have every amends paid to it, for the indignity it has experienced from an individual of my own. Let not my dearest sister,” he continued, “imagine that I would give my sanction to any improper conduct towards the husband she has chosen; permit this to be *my* concern; and I engage to answer any questions he may be inclined to make, provided they are put to me by *himself*.”

Mrs. Goodwin left her brother, and hastened to dress. The business of the toilet completed, she repaired to the drawing-room, where her brother said he would join her. He had not yet returned, when Mr. Goodwin, who had been employed with his steward in the office, as was now his daily practice, entered the apartment.

Mrs. Goodwin endeavoured not to hide the exultation of her heart, which beamed forth in

her still beautiful countenance!—an exultation which such an occasion failed not to heighten. Her look, her voice, her manner, evinced her inward satisfaction as she replied to the question—“Where are you going, my love?”—“By order of my brother, I am waiting to attend him on a visit to my dear and amiable Miss Lucas, and her respectable father.”

It required no oracle to unfold the mystery; the information just delivered explained every thing. It was but too clear that his brother had been made acquainted with a circumstance which he hoped would have been concealed from him. He felt his debased situation in which he found himself without a voice in his own family, where of late he was so much dreaded, and where his will, till his obtrusive guest appeared, as it were, from a watery grave, was a law; which not an individual, who received his wages, and broke his bread, presumed to disobey.

He had no instant reply to make to the unwelcome intelligence just given him by Mrs. Goodwin. He paused for a space, and then said, “I think you are right to obey your excellent brother in all things.”

Unwilling at such a time to meet the cause of his present perplexity, he returned to the office of *honest* Mills; he gave a few instructions, and then mounted his horse; leaving word, if his lady, or Captain Roberts, should make any enquiry, he was gone abroad on business for the day, and, perhaps might not return till the next morning.

As the captain and Mrs. Goodwin approached the cottage, they found its inhabitants in the garden-gate, in expectation of their guests, who were welcomed in terms expressive of the sincere affection and regard in which they were held.

The day passed away on the wings of rational enjoyment. Mrs. Goodwin, conscious of her own inferiority, joined not much in the conversation; but Miss Lucas regarded her with all that interesting condescension that marks the manners of the worthy and the amiable, when they mean to shew attention to those less refined, or less informed than themselves.

The afternoon proving invitingly fine, Mr. Lucas proposed a visit to a neighbouring ruin, remarkable for its antiquity, its great extent, and still more so, for its founder remaining unknown, and even its name forgotten.

"Every research," said Mr. Lucas, "that human wisdom could prompt, has been repeatedly made, to come at the origin of this mysterious fabric. Wherefore it exists, baffles enquiry. To me, this circumstance renders the spot still more interesting; for, can human pride receive a stronger check than in viewing the remains of a pile, costly and vast as this is, while no one can say who raised the tower now tottering to its fall—who marked the extent of its lengthening aisle, or whose remains were deposited beneath its mouldering monuments? From their tablets, the record is written."

ged away; nor name nor date remains to speak to their origin or their cause."

"You could not, my dear Sir," said Captain Roberts, "have proposed any thing more welcome than such a ramble; I know the spot well; and with a hurried and fearful step, have often passed it when a boy." A short and romantic walk brought them into the midst of the ruin:

"In this seat of uninterrupted silence," said Mr. Lucas, "we will sit, Captain Roberts, and listen to the relation of events which have befallen you since we parted; and you say, 'when I hear your story told, it will create a pang!' Alas! many a pang has been mine; but I wave enquiry now; your narrative will solve every question."

"You tell me, that the first concern of your heart, on your return to our peaceful Auburn, was to pour forth its effusions over the grave of your spirit-broken mother; there reposing after a life, which from the hour of her birth, sorrow had darkened! A joyless existence indeed, was her lot; but she is now released from every trouble.

"Alas! my friend, we are apt to murmur at the painful events which nature, in its appointed round, is sure to produce. To mourn the loss of relatives, once dear to us as our own existence, is, in my hope and trust, pardonable in the sight of a God, who cannot err, and to whose decrees submission is our bounden duty."

“ Millions now alive, are hastening to the end; and every passing moment must have its destined victim.

“ With not therefore, excellent young man, surrounded, as you surely are, with every worldly good, to render existence happy; will not to call your parent from her tomb, to witness your present blessings, which, if living, she would have held as the sum of human felicity; for, she loved you, James, dearly she loved you; and for what is she called to that bliss, surpassing all things earthly? The answer must prove a powerful balm to every feeling your bosom harbours. She is called to bliss eternal, as a reward for her strict observance of every duty to her maker and to the world. I have seen her in the performance of all her parts; the last, not least in my love and remembrance, was that of a *mother*!

“ In all its intricate windings, the wisdom of Providence is ever active towards a general good; although its ways are frequently hid from the narrow ken of poor finite beings, or enveloped in the gathering clouds of mystery. But when, for the purposes of conviction, those clouds have been known to dissipate, and the immense arcanum is set forth to comfort, confront, or condemn—how infinitely beyond mortal conception has appeared, if I may be allowed a figure, the vast machinery of heaven. Its numberless wheels in perpetual whirl; every part in constant motion, forming a mighty whole—boundless, immense, and wonderful.

The favored few, admitted to the awful contemplation, are taught to own the poverty of human judgment; and that all the powers of erring man combined, compared to the transcendent wisdom of a God, just in his decrees, and merciful in his dispensations, are no more than folly and presumption."

Here Mr. Lucas ceased, and advanced with his company farther into the ruin; the parts of which were intricate and numerous, while every one presented to the eye of sensibility, a moral, but melancholy picture.

After taking a complete survey of its environs, the party entered upon what had once been the *chapel*, which formed but a very small part of the dilapidated structure; and which was pretty entire, considering the ages it had endured the destroying storms which nature is yearly subject to. The arched and fretted roof displayed the cunning of the hand that formed it. The workmanship was elaborate, the design beautiful.

The painted window had received little injury, and presented a beautiful specimen of the artist's skill. The subject was *The Last Supper*, and nothing could exceed its beauty, for colouring, drawing, and execution.

"Here," said Mr. Lucas, "we view the melancholy memorials of devastating time!—Here stood the high altar, where youth and age, rich and poor, the firm and the feeble, assembled, impressed with one faith, and exalted by one hope; and here, child of Providence!"

casting a look of holy complacency on Captain Roberts, "will we take our seats, and listen to your story." The captain bowed, and then began his promised narrative.

CHAPTER X.

The History of Captain Roberts.

"OF my sentiments towards yourself, my worthy Sir, I must, here remain silent; in my grateful remembrance, they will only terminate with my existence. Let me say, then, that with a heart glowing with gratitude towards my patron, thankful to Providence for its blessings, and impatient for the hour of contest, wherein I hoped to prove myself not altogether unworthy of such friends, and such an appointment, I left the white cliffs of my dear, my native England, in the enviable character of one of its defenders.

"The favoring gale wafted my vessel onward; and, buoyant as the wave on which it floated, hope reigned within my bosom.

"Alas! fond ideas, in vain were ye indulged! The most sanguine wishes that unlettered youth could nourish in imagination, my fortunes had hitherto amply fulfilled,—all unconscious that adversity was preparing her in-

pressive and important trials, and that, in a sad reverse, I should soon experience the mutability of all sublunary good.

“ Ardent expectation soon met with its object ; a vessel of superior force appeared in sight, and a general shout rent the air. Every brave seaman, I had the honor to command, from the lowest order to the highest, exulted, as she was discovered to bear down upon us. She appeared an enemy worthy to contend with ; and our inferiority in size and bearing served only to increase our animation.

“ An engagement soon commenced, and dreadful was the mutual carnage. The troubled sky darkened over the scene of blood.—Clouds, foreboding storm, gathered thick around ; but nature, awful as she then appeared, seemed as if her terrors were still only on their advance ! The livid lightning gleamed around—at every interval the thunder rolled in sullen murmur, as if echoing to the cannon’s roar.—Victory remained for a long time doubtful ; and the struggle to obtain it was maintained with equal spirit. At length, after repeated repulses from numbers far superior to our own, we boarded the enemy’s ship ; tore down the standard of the land of wrong and perfidy, detested France ; and advanced that of our own renowned and happy island,

“ The Albion had sustained but little damage, except in her rigging ; not so with the enemy—pierced, shattered, and dismantled as she was, she no longer was able to abide the

storm, which now raged horribly. The waves running mountain-high, prevented the succour we wished to bestow; and, borne on the furious blast, our ears were assailed with the united cries of the devoted inmates of the now sinking bark; which, in a few minutes, went to the bottom, and was seen no more.

“The loss of my prize was of small consequence, compared to that of the lives of the poor fellows, who thus perished within my view, while I wanted the power to save them. They were indeed enemies; but they were men!

“Alas! after this dreadful sacrifice to contending kingdoms, after all my exertions, and those of my brave companions, what had we gained in the sanguinary struggle?

“The giant object that late appeared so formidable on the bosom of the ocean it darkened; and which to subdue, many a life had been devoted; was it not swallowed up in the troubled and dread abyss—the clamour of opposing cannon put to silence? And what was our loudest tumult? A feeble murmur, compared to the bursting horrors, issuing from an inflamed atmosphere, that now glowed with horrid tint over the rolling billows!

“In this alarming state, returning day held us. I could not but contemplate in the air around me, how every countenance had changed. The eye that lately glanced with defiance on the foe, now appeared as if staring from its orbit, and glaring with wildness.

despair!—Shouts of victory were exchanged for groans of anguish! and, to add to our distress, we now discovered that many were soon to be dashed to pieces on the pitiless rock; and that those who might perchance gain the shore, were only to be thus preserved for insult, for imprisonment, for disease and death. It was the shore of our enemy! We had every thing to expect from vengeance—nothing from humanity.

Our apprehensions were scarcely formed, before they were realized. The ship was driven to the situation we dreaded; the relentless storm still raged, and mocked the skill of the pilot; we struck upon a concealed breaker—another concussion, and another succeeded, till at length, a horrid crash told us all was over, and our bark went to pieces! A long and piteous cry was all I heard! A power I could not contend with, had wrested my maiden laurels! I gave myself up for lost, and soon became insensible.

When life and motion returned, the only sensation I experienced for some time, was that of being still involved in the vast depths of the ocean; from which, however, I was providentially saved. The care of the worthy and the good proved my comfortable lot; the instruments of protecting heaven were, at that moment, watching over me, and employing every means to call back reason to the seat from whence it had been driven. Their endeavour proved successful; I gradually recovered,

and found myself in an elegant chamber, bed, and surrounded by the inmates of a mansion at no great distance from the shore.

“The report of a wreck had brought many to the rocks where it happened, and happy was it for me that I was borne to some distance, and thus providentially escaped that confinement which I dreaded more than any other misfortune. I was informed, that except myself, all had perished!

“I have now to speak of the worthy, the honored Le Brun, by whose care I was rescued from death—by whose honor and friendship I was preserved from captivity.

“The cottage of Le Brun is most romantically situated on the summit of a lofty hill, crowned with wood and verdure, about a league from the spot which proved so fatal to the Albion.

“Its owner informed me on my recovery, that he was wandering over his grounds, as was his usual morning custom. The storm had exhausted its fury, and a beautiful calm succeeded, that cheered every object around him, and tempted him to prolong his ramble.

“A lawn of considerable space, encircled with shrubs and flowers, is most invitingly spread before the front of the cottage, which is simple and picturesque. A secluded and winding path leads from the lawn to the borders of a meandering and pellucid streamlet, which skirts a grove of some extent, planted with trees of a height and foliage, seldom seen at so small a distance from the sea.

"To this scene of contemplation and repose, a rustic bridge affords an entrance; passing which, and pursuing a path which runs through the centre of the enchanting boundary, an artificial grotto, of exquisite workmanship presents itself, and terminates the scene.

"In the construction of this grotesque building, the artist has displayed a skill, not less singular than surprizing. It is nearly surrounded by rock-work, which in one part, by the power of mechanism, is made to open in a manner the most astonishing, into a vast and tremendous cavern, which the sea visits at each returning tide.

"Bruised and exhausted, into this dreary, but protecting haven, I was driven; and providentially, to a spot where the receding tide left me. Le Brun had entered the cavern, and was proceeding to the sands, when the groans I uttered led him to my relief; and thus was I rescued from destruction.

"Instantly summoning his domestics, I was taken to his cottage, placed in a warm bed; and the means which my preservers applied to, were blessed by all-protecting heaven.

"Soon as strength would permit me, I was emboldened, by the open benevolence and frankness that marked the manners of my host and more by the nameless sweetness pictured in the speaking countenance of his interesting and lovely daughter, to discover who I was.

"When I had done so, the worthy Le Brun

expressed himself in a manner becoming the patriot, and the christian. In Le Brun, these characters are nobly blended.

CHAPTER XI.

The History Continued.

"AFTER I had related," resumed the captain, "the short history of my existence, Le Brun, whose story must be blended with my own, said, "I owe my country nothing; I have been the victim of injustice, and my repeated wrongs might have engendered a spirit of revenge; but suffering has been my portion—and I hold it my duty to acquiesce in whatever heaven sees fitting should befall me!

"My wife, my loved Amelia, was left me, a precious pledge, by the truest friend that ever owned the name!

"Mr. Seward, her honored, her lamented parent, was your countryman. Business of material import claimed his presence at Paris, where I then resided; and I rejoiced in the opportunity of shewing all the respect in my power to a gentleman, of whom I had heard my father speak in the highest terms of respect and esteem.

"At that time, I had just lost my dear

parent, and in him, my last remaining relative. After his death, my house became a mournful habitation ; and I was sinking into a state of the deepest melancholy, when Mr. Seward arrived. His presence proved a real consolation—but still more so, the presence of his lovely daughter, the interesting, the dear Amelia !

“ In their society, my melancholy imperceptibly wore away ; and I seemed to gather additional comfort from the thought, that my returning composure of mind, arose in a great degree, from a consciousness of performing, to my utmost power, the offices of hospitality, to the dear and respected friend of my departed father.

“ This delusive idea soon yielded to the certainty of a very different cause. The form, the look of Amelia, her mind, her manner, was ever with me. I loved her to excess ; but Mr. Seward was infinitely my superior—was he not also my guest ? A sense of honor bound me to silence, on the only subject on which depended my future happiness or misery.

“ At a public assembly it was, that Amelia attracted the attention of the marquis of N——, a nobleman of an acknowledged licentious character ; and the following day, Mr. Seward was insulted by proposals of the most dishonorable nature.

“ The person the marquis had thought proper to employ on so degrading an errand—(what will not vice stoop to ?)—was a nobleman of still higher rank than himself ;—his

friend in social infamy ! It was well known they were alike a disgrace to human nature, and, as occasion might require, panders to the passions of each other.

" The duke of—— was reddening at the honest reproach of an insulted Englishman, when I entered the apartment to which I had been summoned by my friend.

" He explained the cause that gave rise to his indignation, adding, ' I know your spirit, Le Brun—I am your guest—act as you would for the father now in his grave, whose memory you revere, were *he* living, and had received an indignity like mine !'

" The duke was preparing a reply ; but insisted on his instant departure. Provoked by an insolent hesitation, I rose into passion, and bestowed on the titled villain a deserved name. He advanced towards me, and drew. I was unarmed—but, inspired by my cause, I seized the weapon and broke it over the prostrate form of the dastardly coward, whom my indignant arm had felled to the ground.

" I was well beloved by my neighbours—the affair become very public—my conduct was in every respect misrepresented—and all who knew me, and likewise knew the influence of those I had offended, trembled for my safety.

" In this dilemma, we had no other resource than instant flight ; I gathered together what effects I could, in the short time permitted me, and in a few weeks, I found myself secure in

Mr. Seward's mansion, in England; and which was situated in the most retired and romantic part of Derbyshire.

"The property I had hastily collected consisted of jewels, few in number, but the value was immense. To a gentleman in London, a brother merchant, I presented them; he gave me their full value; and, in his integrity and candor, I had fresh reason to revere the character of an Englishman.

"News soon arrived, that convinced me I had left Paris but just in time. I had been falsely accused of rebel practices; and my property I left behind, and which was considerable, was seized upon by government. I was nevertheless thankful for my providential escape, and felt myself happy in my asylum.

"To add to my felicity, my beloved Amelia was at my side in every ramble I made among the enchanting scenery which surrounded the peaceful dwelling of her father.

"Insensibly passed away a year of repose and happiness, at the end of which, Mr. Seward was confined to his room by an accident, occasioned by his falling from a scaffold, erected by some workmen, for the repair and embellishment of a beautiful pavilion in his pleasure-grounds, previous to its doors being thrown open for the entertainment of numerous guests yearly invited, to celebrate, with song, dance, and revelry, the birth-day of his Amelia. His situation was alarming!

"The birth-day of Amelia arrived—but,

alas! it proved that of death to her reverend parent!

"Some time before the mournful event, Amelia had become my wife. Her love had snatched mine; and her approving father, as he presented the precious, the invaluable gift, said—(and shall I ever forget his look and manner?)—'I glory in my children!'

"But alas! I soon had to say, with your sublime and emphatic poet—

"Woe cluster—rare are solitary woes;

"They lose a train, they tread each other's heels."

"Le Brun, at this period of his affecting story, laid his hand on his heart. His lovely daughter embraced him with a tear! 'Weep not, my only comfort,' said the sorrowing man—your's is genuine sympathy; you never knew your angel mother; you weep for your father alone! but my child, my *second* Amelia; your affliction only sharpens the arrows of recollection!"

"In obedience to the entreaty of Le Brun, Amelia left the room for the remainder of his narrative.

"Le Brun continued.—That dear image of a saint in heaven, was never closed in the maternal embrace! In her birth, I lost my Amelia!

"After her death, every scene I before me lighted in reminded me, but too sensibly, of my irreparable loss; for, till that painful period, I had never walked forth alone. My dear

He had ever been my companion ; our minds had been congenial ; we both had been fond of retirement ; and every scene which nature delighted to embellish, in what she called our earthly paradise, brought back to my harassed and dejected mind, the lost, the lamented friend, who would wander there no more.

“ Thoughts of my infant charge at length aroused me from my lethargy of grief—every look, every action, every sentiment, reminded me of her whose seat was in heaven !

“ Proud of my darling child, as she grew up, I procured masters in every female accomplishment ; she excelled in the dance ; she played so as to interest all who heard her. Her mind gained improvement from the stores planted there by all-bountiful nature, and that part of her time, not demanded by her teachers or her parent, was employed in a library extensive, and admirably chosen by her revered grandfather.

“ Twelve years had elapsed, since my setting foot in England, when I received letters from my friend in Paris, informing me of the death of the marquis of N———, and that his end was marked by the most severe contrition for a life, which had been blackened by every crime that degrades the individual, and annoys society.

“ The cottage, if such it may be deemed, we are now in, was built by the marquis.—Here he breathed his last ; and I fear, many a dark and fearful deed these conscious shades have witnessed.

"In his dying moments he confessed, that it was by his machinations, assisted by the duke of ———, that my troubles in Paris took their origin. As some atonement, he left me the part of his estate, as well as a public memorial of my innocence.

"My friend closed this important information, with requesting me to come to Paris without delay, to take possession of what had been bequeathed to me; to apply to government for a restoration of those effects, of which I had been so unjustly deprived; and to assert my claim of innocence. The latter was readily allowed and ratified; but my property never was restored.

"Can I then respect my country? Had I been a beggar, a beggar I might have remained; allowed only to wander unquestioned through the land, where power abused, and lordly villainy, had robbed me of my rights. Oh land, hastening to decay! Oh kingdom, tottering to thy fall! Thy people, oppressed by those in high places, will one day rise—they will rehearse their wrongs in thunder, and dreadful will prove their vengeance!

"Le Brun ceased. He apologized for the warmth of his expressions; adding—Here then, Sir, you find me; I love your country; I revere its laws; I honour its natives. Need I then add, that here you are doubly welcome.

"Eight summers have passed over my head since I took possession of this retirement. My only gratification is to wander forth with my

and, whose remarks remind me of her who is gone. From time to time, I entertain thoughts of returning to my estate in England—but here I still linger, as if unwilling to revisit scenes of happiness, which will no more be mine.

“The duke of O——, a few months past, was summoned by death to quit his princely possessions. Wrong, oppression and guilt, had marked his existence; and if report errs not, he has left a son behind him, who will not only perpetuate his *name*, but also his *infamy*.”

CHAPTER XII.

The History Concluded.

“IN what remains to unfold of my eventful history,” resumed Captain Roberts, “I shall be as brief as circumstances will permit. Consistent with his manners, was the conversation of Le Brun; refined, elegant, and interesting. When, in recounting my own adventures, I mentioned the name of Admiral Sydney, he arose from his chair, and with an animated look, which spoke to his inward satisfaction, he rejoined—Admiral Sydney! and is that brave, that good man known to you? Your welcome intelligence renovates my heart. F

have lived, thank heaven! to serve the friend of the best, the bravest Englishman I ever knew. Yes, Sir, the admiral was long my intimate, and my neighbour. Oh! what a gratification it will prove, to see that worthy, that respectable gentleman.

“When regret for my departed wife, preyed upon my frame, and my dejected heart sickened at the voice of comfort; it would be impossible to recount the variety of means employed by Admiral Sydney, to remove the mental lethargy I was sinking into!

“In the fine and even texture of such a mind as your friend and mine possessed, the traits of humanity; how uniformly conspicuous! And yet, my friend, how contradictory to such a mind were the calls of a profession which led him to behold every feeling pity is allied to; outraged amidst scenes of tumult, carnage, and dismay; as it has done, when he has obeyed the indispensable summons, and left with mutual regret the pleasurable haunts of peaceful society.

“Those engaged in the dreadful, and undoubt, necessary, trade of war, we are fully sensible must never swerve or shrink from its duties. What are those duties? In what do they consist? In a cool adoption of measures which science opens to the professor, and which are justified by nations civilized and enlightened—measures which must become the study of the commander in the tent, or in the cabin; and which have for their object the murder of fellow-men.

Strange contradictions! Thus engaged have been the first, the greatest of human characters. Thus could our Sydney behold the mangled heaps of wounded, dying, and slain, on his boasted deck of honor; in the midst of which he has often stood, and, with a firm heart and collected mind, from a station so sanguinary, so foreign to his own gentle nature—issued forth his orders for massacre and destruction!

Time passed for imperceptibly away in the happy mansion of the worthy Le Brun, that several months had elapsed before I became sensible of its rapid progress, and that I should begin to think of regaining my native shore—from which, accompanied with the fairest hopes, I had embarked, to witness only the fallacy of mortal expectation.

To summon up sufficient resolution to speak on the subject to Le Brun, was a task not to be dispensed with; but which I found of a nature more severe than I had even apprehended. The child of his heart was also the only object of my own. Time had increased affection, and circumstance had fixed it too deeply, ever to be eradicated or lessened.

After many a painful struggle between duty to my country and love for its fair alien, I at length informed Le Brun, the period was arrived, when I must yield to the severe obligation of bidding him and his daughter farewell! Grasping my hand, with a fervor strongly pictured in his manly countenance, he re-

joined—generous, and respected Englishman. The period is also arrived, to me momentous to you, I trust, grateful!

“Let me claim your attention to a proposal, which will not, cannot fail to convince you of my fondest regard, my most sincere esteem.

“Notwithstanding various disappointments, which I have experienced, in my intercourse with the trading part of society, in addition to losses I have been doomed to sustain, from the injustice of this my native country, fortune has still left me in possession of abundance.

“The government under which I remain subject, have I not found it hostile and unjust? It has once involved my property, it has once endangered my existence! I now mean to depart from a land, of which it has been my misfortune to be born a member—A land, where oppression has weighed me down; where frequent wrong has been my portion, and where redress has never fallen to my lot!

“I come now, my friend, to the subject on which depends the happiness of my latter days, which I propose to pass in a kingdom, where its natives have my respect, its laws my veneration.

“To your regret, and mine, my darling child has, for some time, been drooping, absent, and dejected. I suspected the truth; besought her to disclose it; it was not withheld from my urgent enquiry. Her confession has half completed my only wish on this side

the grave, the rest remains with you! To be explicit, you are beloved by Amelia! and my proud heart tells me, that after such an avowal on her part, you will not hesitate to become my son.

"To picture the sensations, which at this blissful moment took possession of my heart, would prove but a vain attempt; I shall only say, I received the blessing as I ought.

"Reasons of the utmost weight, and which you may well conceive, prevented our instant union. It required some degree of caution to effect my departure from a jealous and vindictive land, where it had been my good fortune to remain unknown. A discovery of my being still in existence, of my real character, and under the roof and protection of Le Brun, would, I well knew, be attended with consequences fatal to us both.

"But fortune favoring, our apprehensions were not of long continuance. The domestics of Le Brun loved their master too well, to think of betraying me; and, by his excellent and guarded management, in a few weeks, I found myself in perfect safety on my dear, my native shore.

"To render felicity perfect, as far as human circumstances could render it, in a short period of time, their own country, after my departure, no longer being that of safety, I was joined by Le Brun and that adored and lovely girl, whom, in a few days after her arrival in England, I led to the altar.

"The ceremony over, and every wish completed, we proposed to visit my father's estate in Derbyshire; and there I was to leave my mother and Amelia for a season, after I had paid my duty to the admiral who, we had been informed, had returned from Wales, where his presence had been required in a concern of moment.

"The motive for this short absence, on my part, I surely need not explain. . . The sod that covered a parent's remains was yet unwetted by a tear of mine; the honored guide of my youth,—a sister tenderly beloved,—all, all conspired to hasten my journey to this native *Auburn*!

"The mansion of Le Brun, is surrounded by every charm of wild and romantic nature, and Amelia expressed, in the liveliest terms, her satisfaction, on viewing the diversified scenery through which she passed. A remarkable fine day was drawing to its close, before we entered the long and spacious avenue of trees to which the massive and time-honored gates of the equally ancient edifice, presented a nobler termination.

"We were admiring the beautiful appearance of the small Gothic church; the elegance of its spire; and the pensive character which marked its boundaries; when a solemn knell proceeding from its tower, announced the departure of a spirit—released from its earthly confine.

"We entered the abode of our father, and

just seated in an apartment, the windows of which commanded a nearer view of the church, when a repetition of the awful warning induced us to enquire the cause.

"Alas!" replied the matron, who had the care of the house, from the time Le Brun departed from it, to the present moment, "alas! that doleful knell has occasioned many a watery eye. It goes, your honor, for the best of gentlemen that ever looked upon the blessed day! The poor (and God knows; we have enough,) have lost a friend indeed—Ah! woe is me; I have cause to remember his goodness to my poor daughter, Bet, when her husband lay ill, and could not help himself or his family. Never, never, shall I know his better—now Admiral Sydney is gone!"

Impressed with the same surprize, the same sorrow, we looked at each other, and at the same moment, exclaimed—"Admiral Sydney dead!"—At length, recovered in a degree from the alarm her intelligence had occasioned, we called on Mrs. Smith, to inform us of all she knew.

"The good old woman, well as her grief would let her, gave us to understand, that the admiral had, as he was passing through that place, received letters from London, which informed him of the elopement of his only daughter, with one of her aunt's domestics.—But," interrupting herself, "there is Mr. Delves, all this time, wishing to see you, Sir, and better able to tell the story. He begged

I would give him instant notice of your arrival. He said his news would be great grief to you, come when you would."

"Mr. Delves at that instant entered the room. He was unknown to Le Brun, having only been in his situation of steward to the admiral, since the death of the person who had served that office before him, and which happened about two years previous to the present mournful period.

"On his entrance, he bowed to Le Brun, saying, 'your appearance, Sir, and your manner, convinces me who you are. You are the friend of the late Admiral Sydney. Alas! poor gentleman! it was his fervent wish to see you before he died.'

"On his return from London, where he had been on the melancholy business you doubtless have been informed of by Miss Smith, he was seized with a fever, which the physician entertained but faint hopes of his surmounting; for several days he remained insensible; at intervals calling on his lost, his undone child! His ravings at length, became so excessive, as to preclude the most distant thoughts of his surmounting them; when a sudden change took place, and hopes were formed he would yet do well.

"In a few days he was pronounced to be in a state of convalescence; but appearances were deceitful.

"When your letter arrived, informing me of your intention of passing the remainder of

Marriage in England; and that you would introduce him to your son-in-law, to whom he was not altogether unknown, he said to me—*“And does you have heard me mention a brave lad, of the name of Roberts. It is true, the ship he commanded went to the bottom, with the crew; so was it given out—but lives have been preserved by miracle; and I have a strange notion running in this bewildered brain of mine, that my brave boy James, is the very person he means. Should it prove so, I am not so plunged in misery, but what I should experience comfort in again beholding him.—Be it as it may, I shall, to-morrow, alter my will, in which he shall not be forgotten. If alive, I know he will drop a tear of sorrow for his poor old Sydney; and I will take care that he shall also give another to gratitude.”*

Saying this, he put into my hand the packet I now deliver, adding, *“It is my wish to live to see my old friend Le Brun but, if I cannot bear up till then, tell him I prayed for blessings on him and his child.”* I was then dismissed by my dear and lamented master.

On the evening of that day, an unexpected, and alarming change took place. He was sitting in his chair, conversing with me and Mrs. Smith, when he suddenly dropped. We raised him on the bed, and, when the physician arrived, that gentleman said, *“I can do no more for my dear, my valued friend; he is hastening to a better world, and you will quickly lose the best of masters. He is now*

at ease ; he known us not ; ~~he will suffer~~
 more !—alas ! he is now going !—that
 has relieved him !—He will not utter another

“ You will pardon, Sir, my being so par-
 ticular in my relation ; but I knew my master
 long before he became so, and I ever loved
 him.” ‘ You have not my pardon only,’ said
 Le Brun, ‘ but my thanks. You speak of
 your late excellent master as becomes a faithful
 servant ; such, I doubt not, you have proved,
 and, if my remembrance can be of any service
 to you, depend on it you shall not be forgot-
 ten.’

“ On the departure of Delves, Le Brun ex-
 pressed himself pleased with his manner, and
 said, ‘ A faithful domestic, where great trust
 is reposed, is invaluable. If I find Mr. Delves
 what his looks proclaim, he shall not want em-
 ploy, or encouragement.’”

“ Being left to Delves, after dismissing a
 servant to Mrs. Smith, to say we would attend
 her at the supper-hour, we proceeded to open
 the contents of the packet. The first object
 that presented itself, was a letter, bearing the
 superscription—*To my dear friend Le Brun.*”

“ Of this letter I present to you a copy.”
 Mr. Lucas pressed the paper to his lips, and to
 his bosom ! ‘ I told you,’ added the captain,
 ‘ my relation would create a pang ; and, hav-
 ing nothing more to add, you have only to
 peruse, and feel as I have done ;—as I have
 done, did I say ?—You and I, Sir, never can
 never *will*, without a mutual tear—remember
 our Sydney.’”

as the paper read :—*Friend of my Happier Days !*—

I feel the work of death is nearly completed.—I cannot survive my child's disgrace ; why did I commit her to such a guardian ? If, fallen as she is, she seeks the presence of her father's friend, tell her she is forgiven. It will be of little avail applying to my pitiless sister. I found no comfort there ; she gave me audience, with no other purpose than to torture my heart with unfeeling surmise and bitter reflection.

"I leave to you the settlement of all my earthly concerns. If living, Louisa will still find my remembrance is that of a father. I have shed many a tear for her fault ; I am sensible she will return a few for my sorrow. In my will, you will find two names, which I beg you to consider dear to me, even as your own. Place those of Lucas and of Roberts, if the gallant owner of the latter be yet in existence—place them, Le Brun, in your list of chosen friends—dear and deserving.

"Eternal God of justice and of mercy ! shorten my sufferings ! protect my erring child ! —Oh ! Le Brun—be kind to my poor Louisa, and
"Farewell !"

Mr. Lucas, deeply affected, returned the paper ; saying, ' You have indeed made good your preface. Our loss can never be replaced. Believe me, such friends as our Sydney are not to be met with at every turn.'

The narrative of Roberts had spread a gloom

over the minds of his hearers ; silence prevailed during their ride home ; and, as soon as she entered the door of her father's cottage, Miss Lucas begged she might be allowed to bid her guests farewell for that evening. Scarcely waiting a reply, with the full tear trembling in her eye, she hastened to her chamber. Mr. Lucas, after requesting they would renew their visit the next day, and to make it as early as possible, said, " I will now dismiss my dear friends for the present. But let me, Captain Roberts, ere we part, ask a question, which I hope you will not deem improper. Why, my young Sir, could we not be informed of your being saved from the death that threatened you ? Were there no means by which——"

" Revered Sir," interrupted Roberts, " should you refuse my conduct, in this instance, a justification, you will not, I am assured you will not, totally condemn my motive for adopting it.

" Before I had formed an idea that my misfortune could have found admission to the London papers, a friend of Mr. Le Brun's, who lived near Auburn, called on that gentleman, in his way up the country. He brought the afflicting intelligence of my mother's death, which I must have sunk under, but for the attentions I experienced.

" Though I had been unfortunate, my spirit was not sufficiently subdued, not to revolt at every possible means that might offer, to preserve myself from returning to my native

country in a helpless and indigent condition. I knew not then the favorable disposition of the wealthy Le Brun towards me; and I was on the point of making my situation known to Admiral Sydney, when the declaration of the former rendered such a measure no longer needful."

Saying this, and repeating their promise of an early call on the following morning, the doors of the cottage were closed on its visitors, while its inmates retired to the duties of prayer and praise, and to the comforts of repose and innocence.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Guess at the Truth.

WHEN the brother and sister arrived at Image-Place, they found Mr. Goodwin in the drawing-room, waiting, as he was pleased to say, their return, in order, before sleep closed his eyes, to solicit the pardon of Captain Roberts, for his conduct towards the respectable family at the cottage, where, he was but too sensible, it must be canvassed.

Goodwin was, to use the general phrase, "a man of few words," except when he took

his place as "king of the company," and errors in speech were tolerated.

His appearance and his manner, at the present moment, gave evident tokens that he had taken more freely than was his usual custom of the wine which was on the table before him. When the captain was seated, Goodwin continued: "In a place like this my good brother, scandal-grubbers are pretty numerous; I am sure I have found it so: I am free to own, that when my best wife here gave me her hand, I did not altogether approve of the public situation she was placed in; exposed to the frothy compliments of every fool who was fond of hearing himself talk. Where there is *love*, captain, you know, there will be *jealousy*; though I must confess, her conduct will defy evil tongues. Here, then, have I taken my seat, longing for your return and good company. Come, wife—come, brother; may I fill the glass? and may the word be, forgive and forget?"

The captain replied, "I have no objection to join you there, Mr. Goodwin. Little minds may nourish the recollection of injuries from mine, believe me, they are from the moment dismissed. But understand me rightly; I remain not *unconscious* I am dismissing a sense of *injuries*, never to be repeated."

"It shall be a part of my business, to-morrow, to remove certain prejudices raised against you, and, on too just grounds, in the breast of Mr. Lucas."

the only daughter, Goodwin, and such a daughter as is Miss Lucas, you cannot but be fully sensible, must be dear to our reverend friend. Could he hear her character, ever spotless, and never before questioned, traduced by a despicable calumniator? Certainly not. Mild and forbearing as he is in speech and disposition, it is with no small degree of pain I witness, as I have done, a departure from that usual manner, when your name, has by chance, been mentioned.

It shall be my endeavour to become a mediator between you; assured, as I am, that a reconciliation will be productive of the happiest consequences. When that reconciliation is once established, your house will no longer be deserted, as it has been; many of the surrounding gentry, who now refuse you their notice, from having once acted improperly to a gentleman, whose character is held in universal estimation, will then admit you among their circles; your error will be in time forgotten, and your time, which has of late passed away in gloom and dissatisfaction, will no longer prove a burthen; respectable acquaintance will cheer your hours, and occasional friendship will raise you in your esteem.

Were I, because possessed of wealth and independence, to remain at home in a supine state, reckless of my country's weak, could I ever reflect on my late gallant patron, without self-reproach and condemnation? No, never will I prove ungrateful to his memory. The

moment is at hand, when my services will be required; but, before I answer the demand of my country, I mean to perform, towards Mrs. Goodwin, the part of a brother.

“Hitherto, I have known only conquest: I have been successful even beyond my most sanguine hopes; my late misfortune has not checked my ardor; it has only more strongly impressed upon my mind, that there is no contending with Omnipotence, when its inscrutable decrees are gone forth, to effect their purposes of universal welfare. In the tempest, wherein I lost the object for which I had so deeply ventured, for which the blood of my kindred race was let forth, it was doubtless, wrested from me for my good; has it not rendered me what I am? But for that event, I had never known Le Brun, I had never known the blessings which now surround me.

“With these liberal-minded men, to whose kind regards I owe every thing I enjoy, it was a maxim, ‘We live not to ourselves.’ I shall pursue their example; I shall still preserve the line of duty and gratitude, and I trust heaven will preserve me, for a calm and blissful evening, in the midst of an approving and affectionate family. That hope *may* be frustrated; if it is, I trust religion will enable me to submit, as becomes a man; and that no action of my own, will ever lead me to despair.

“To learn the present situation of the ill-advised Louisa Sydney, I hold an indispensable task. Wherever she may be, whoever with,

consolation, not reproach, shall be my object. Let her do as she pleases, she shall be no other sister. Worldly wealth she needs not; but I will assist her with my counsel; I will shield her with my protection."

The hour growing late, the party retired, with a much better opinion of each other than they had before entertained. Captain Roberts was sensible that his sister had her faults, and that his presence had placed a curb upon the conduct of her husband towards her. He was likewise aware, that he might shortly be summoned away, and in respect to Goodwin, he was still willing to hope more from his gratitude than his fear.

During their ride to the cottage, on the following morning, Captain Roberts congratulated his sister on the reformed conduct of her husband, and failed not to represent how much it was her duty and interest to look well to her own, in order to give permanence to the existing amity between them.

On entering the library, they found Miss Lucas alone.—'Where's our friend?' said Mr. Roberts.—'Gone to London.'—'To London!—you surprise me.'—'That surmise,' continued Miss Lucas, 'would be materially lessened, were you fully acquainted with the sincere regard my father had for Admiral Sydney. When he arose this morning, he said, 'I must obey the dictates of a pillow consultation. If I can save her, Louisa Sydney must not be lost.' 'Generous father!'

I rejoined, 'as a daughter, it would ill become me to question; but were I a friend only, and your elder, and bearing the same holy persuasion with yourself, I should still bend to your determination. And true I said, Captain Roberts—for my revered father acts upon mature deliberation; he never proceeds to execute a purpose, without duly weighing its probable effect, its natural consequence.'

While Miss Lucas was speaking, Miss Goodwin surveyed her with attention; the tear glistened in her eye—the thoughts of her own parent flashed across her memory.

Miss Lucas continued—'My father has no doubts that the admiral's sister is not altogether what he would hope to find her. He suspects more than he dare utter:—'Yes, my child,' said he, 'the mystery weighs upon my mind. Something tells me, dark and fearful deeds will come to light, I go to take the business from our young friend, who, I am assured, meditates to engage in it. Scenes, soon to be developed, will be more fitting for the contemplation of the minister than the man of war. His country's cause demands his sword—domestic wrongs call for my reproof. Vengeance is not for man; it remains with the *Eternal*.'

'You know, Captain Roberts, the warm heart and pure mind of my father; he has undertaken, and to the minutest tittle he means to fulfil, what he conceives to be his duty.'

On the second day from that of his depar-

ture from Auburn, Mr. Lucas alighted from a hackney-coach at the mansion of Miss Sydney.

The folding-doors opened, and the porter surveyed the driver of the *numbered* vehicle, with a look in which were pictured surprise and displeasure. This well-fed and important personage was, no doubt, offended at his loud flourish at the knocker, that instrument being seldom wielded but by his betters,

“In gaudy livery deck’d, and dainty care.”

The name of Mr. Lucas being announced, after waiting some minutes in the hall, he was ushered into a superb apartment, where sat the complete woman of fashion in the person of the sister of the late Admiral Sydney, who was engaged in perfecting, in the varied quavers of an Italian air, a favorite parrot, which had been presented to her by a person of a well-known character, and who shared the chances of the fickle goddess, with a titled gambler of equal notoriety.

The lesson assigned to ‘Pretty Poll,’ was a selection from a favorite opera, which this extraordinary bird, the morning wonder of all the fashionables in town, had learned and executed to a miracle, to the no small mortification of the performer, who, celebrated as he was, still found, that Poll proved a rival not a little formidable, as the applause he gained at the theatre was sure to be succeeded with—
‘Have you heard the parrot?’

The lady, without deigning even a look,

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went on to the end of her lesson, to the small astonishment of her visitor. At length, viewing him through the glass, she said, 'Oh! you are the poor parson of Auburn; you wished to see me last night, but that was impossible, as it was that of my rout. Well, Mr. ——— (I forget your name,) has your patron heard of Louisa? Come, tell me all about it, for I long to know ———.'

'Is it the sister of Admiral Sydney,' rejoined Mr. Lucas, 'who puts such a question?'

'It is,' said the lady in return,—'do you mean to look me through, Sir?'

Mr. Lucas, still preserving his steady countenance, said, 'It were to be wished, that your ill-fated brother could have done that.'

The lady, seemingly confused, in a tone of resentment exclaimed 'Do you come here, Sir, to insult my brother and me?' 'No madam, your brother can no more be deceived or insulted; my business, with your pardon, is to winnow truth from falsehood. Where lady, is Louisa Sydney?'

'Enquire of her paramour, and forget not whom you are before.'

To this burst of reproof and passion, no other reply was made, than, 'I lament the person before me *forgets herself*.'

A pause ensued. Miss Sydney took up the salts from the table, and placing her cambric handkerchief before her eyes, sobbed forth—'I pray you, for a moment cease to be rude, and tell me—what of my brother?'

A deep and heart-prompted sigh accompanied the answer, 'Admiral Sydney is no more!'

Miss Sydney still hid her countenance with her handkerchief, and was silent.

Mr. Lucas proceeded—'Your conduct, madam, must undergo an investigation, or you must become less haughty and more explicit. You say (and contrition to your heart for the unfeeling and indelicate sentence)—'Ask her paramour!'—there to your confusion know, your advice has been anticipated. I now leave you—the night is a still season—employ it in studying how best to solve your own mystery—it *must* be done, ere the return of another morning.'

Mr. Lucas instantly quitted the house, and left its owner trembling for the effects her own deed might occasion, to ruminate, and determine.

* * * * *

'Well!' says the reader, 'and now we have travelled through *one* volume, out of *three*—and no Beggar Boy!'—

In this respect, the writer only follows the example of his betters. But the child of misery is on his way.—Refuse not, fair and gentle country-women, your commiseration for—*The Sorrows of Alfred!*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

I



THE
BEGGAR BOY:

A NOVEL,
IN THREE VOLUMES.

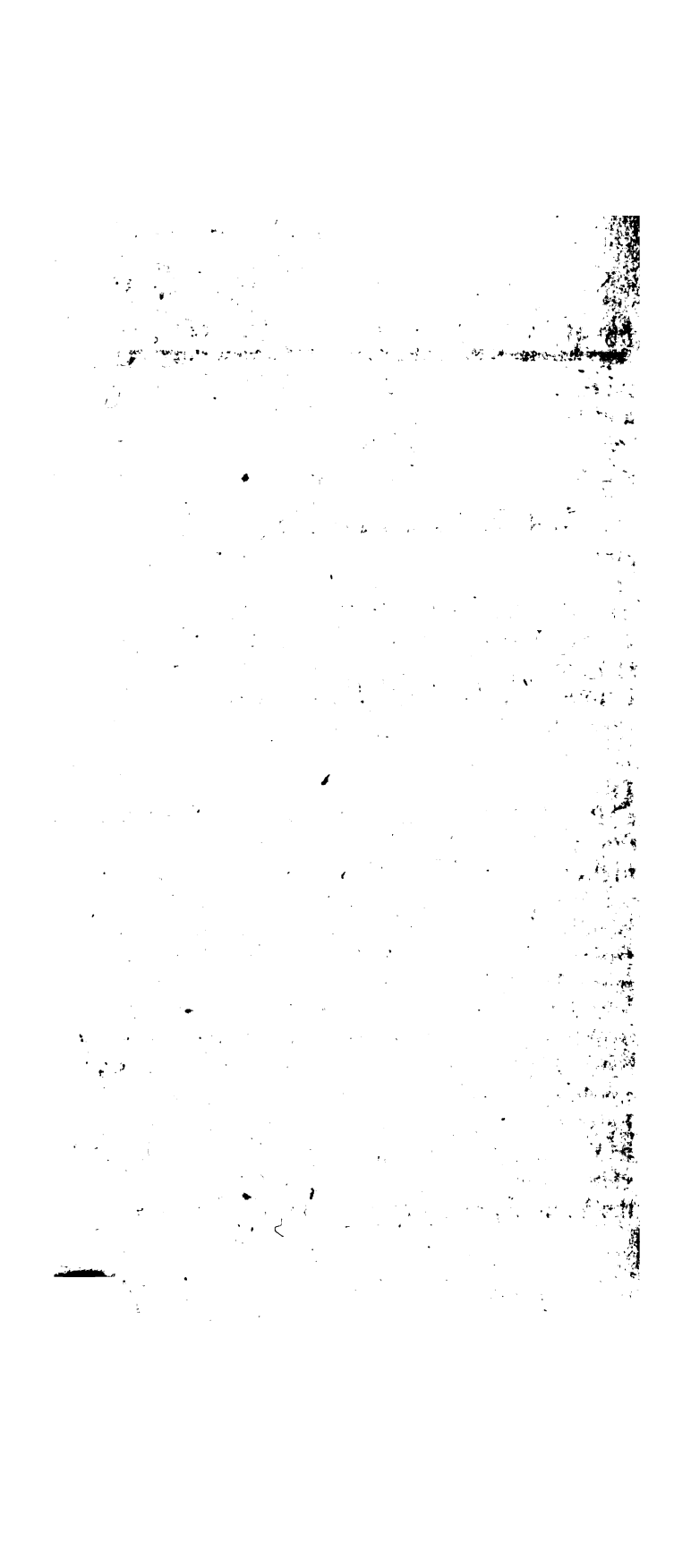
BY THE LATE
MR. THOMAS BELLAMY.

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==

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THE BEGGAR BOY.

CHAPTER XIV.

Virtue in Livery.

SPLENDID equipage, in full range before the ample mansion of Miss Sydney, on the night of her rout, which the late domestic misfortune did not prevent, kept the more humble carriage, in which Mr. Lucas was conveyed from his inn, to Grosvenor-Square, at its proper distance from its crowded entrance.

Alighting, therefore, from the vehicle, that gentleman walked onward, amidst a blaze of light, reflected from the flame of numerous torches, to the steps leading to the hall, where he would have been refused even admittance, had he not been recognized by one of the servants in waiting, who had formerly lived with the admiral; and who, with great respect, in-

formed him, he was fearful his lady could not be seen at that time; but that he would, nevertheless take up his message, which was, that a person wished to be indulged with a short conference, on a business of the last importance, and in which she was materially concerned.

The domestic received a severe reprimand, for attempting to disturb the course of such an evening, devoted to guests of a description so widely different. 'I can give the person an audience to-morrow,' added the offended Miss Sydney, 'at present, and you ought to have known as much, a rusty cassock-bearer would be an object not less improper than unbecoming in these apartments.'

Although the exact words of Miss Sydney were respectfully withheld, Mr. Lucas gathered enough to create a suspicion of insult, which failed not still more to embitter disappointment.

But, whatever were his private feelings, he found himself obliged to submit to the denial he could not prevent. The night was dark and unpleasant—he had dismissed his coach, and another was not to be procured. He had proceeded some way, when, previous to his turning a corner, he stopped to consider the nearest road to his inn, and was on the point of applying to a passenger for information, when Edward, the footman before-mentioned, came up to him, to make enquiry after his worthy old master.

“**But, Sir!**” said the poor fellow, ‘would I had never left him! I have gotten into a strange place now. But I must see London, and am rightly served. Many, and many again, is the time I have grieved for my folly, in quitting a service where I was so mainly well off, to go where all manner of wickedness is for ever afoot. But come what will, aye, even if I were to beg my bread home again, I am determin’d to leave mistress in her own ways; and queer ones they are, and will bring her to ruin and repentance, or my name is not Ned Alderson.’

On any other occasion than the present, the upright principles of Mr. Lucas would have prevented him from holding a conversation with the domestic of a family, respecting what might be going forward therein. But a desire of hearing all that Edward might have to say, concerning the unfortunate Louisa, weighed down every lesser consideration.

Mr. Lucas informed Edward of the death of his late master, which affected the faithful creature exceedingly. ‘Ah, poor gentleman!’ said he, ‘little did he think, when he was last at his sister’s, that out of all the domestics who used to delight in his being in the house, and would, one and all, have run to the world’s end to serve him, not above half of ’em remained; and now it’s worse, much worse! Alack-a-day, Sir, we are dwindled down to four or five only, and two-thirds of the women servants are packed off.’

‘What mean you?’ interrupted Mr. Lucas. ‘I saw a long range of your fellows in the night, and looked in from the station from whence you observed me.’ ‘Yes, Sir,’ replied the intelligent Edward; ‘they had on my livery, and were true; but, Lord bless you! there are not at any moment no less than three *excursions*; I think they call’em, in the house; and the men you saw, why they are no more than so many strangers, as it were, set upon the watch; for my mistress, they say, is worse than nothing at all! and as for poor dear Miss Louisa!—Well, God knows all hearts; but, I fear, could it be turned out, a black one would be found belonging to somebody.’

‘It is a matter, Edward,’ said Mr. Lucas, ‘of the last importance, that I should fully understand your meaning.—Pray, explain.’

‘Why, Sir, you know, it is given out, that Miss Louisa is eloped with my lady’s butler, but it’s no such thing, believe me. He has left his place, it’s well known; and, on the very same morning too, that the dear young lady was missing. My mistress, it is said, owed him a mint of money, which was left him by a relation; and, when he heard how things were going on, why, he thought as how he ought to begin to look about him; but it was too late; he found out he had been tricked, and he made no secret of saying as much, and pretty loudly too. Many and many a hard word have I heard him bestow on my lady. Well, Sir, not long ago, we lost my worthy

master's only child, in the manner I was just now saying, and, sure enough, my heart aches to think on the day. But a short time before this sad mishap, Butler became all at once, as it were, tongue-tied about his money, which he was before forever on the full rack about; and what made us all wonder still more, he was often shut up with mistress for hours at a time.—Oh, Sir, as sure as you and I live, something is wrong!

Mr. Lucas thanked Edward for all he had said; he had not far now to go to his inn; and therefore reminded his intelligencer, that, if he did not return, his absence might be noticed. 'And let it,' replied Edward, with an honest warmth; 'do you think, Mr. Lucas, I'd leave you to find your way home, by yourself? No, no; you were beloved and honored by my poor lost master; and I know my duty better, than not to respect his friend.'

Edward would take no denial; and, when Mr. Lucas parted with him, he assured that gentleman, that it should be his first endeavour to find out all he could, and bring him intelligence; 'And Heaven send,' he cried, 'all may yet be well!' In that wish, Mr. Lucas joined, and returned to his room, where he had not sat a longer time than was sufficient to write letters to Auburn, to set the worthy hearts there at ease, respecting himself, when Edward returned, and begged leave to be admitted.

On his entrance, he exclaimed, 'Ah! Sir,

the murder will out, depend on't. I had just returned to the hall, when, who should make her appearance there, but Mrs. Phelps, the late butler's sister; and an honest creature she is, as ever broke bread. But, dear heart, I never saw a person in such a rage as she was to be sure!—'Where's your mistress? Let me see her directly!—I told her, that you, Sir, had just been refused, and I had got blame to the bargain.—'Ah! there it is,' said she, 'pretty doings!—but I'll sift it all out;—and my fool of a brother, to be shammed off with a hundred pound, when six won't pay him! Fine ladies indeed, to borrow money of servants, and make them part with their honesty to get back their own! A likely story, too, trumped up;—he run off with Miss Louisa!—but i'faith, he shall be no cat's-paw, the while I am his sister! He was always an honest man, and an honest man he shall still remain; or he bids good-bye to Jane Phelps for ever; that he does, I can tell him, for his comfort!'

'We were all astonished, Sir,' continued Edward, 'to hear her run on like any one out of one's wits; oh, were I to have given me the wealth of the world, I could not tell all she laid her tongue to. At last she said, 'Edward, tell that good gentleman, Mr. Lucas, as how my brother has been bribed, and bribed too, with his own, to take himself directly off, without saying any thing to any body—aye, and to keep out of the way, and not mind what sayings might go abroad, which he

had nothing to do with. But he shall not stir, that he shan't; and I swear by the father, that I will see Miss Sydney, and give her her own, this instant; and who shall hinder me?'—I told her to consider, the men were catching at her words—'catching, indeed! aye, aye, you may say that; catching's their trade. Why, don't I know what they are? A'n't they all *beauts*' followers, tricked up in livery? Shame on such doings, say I!'

Edward continued. 'After a great deal to do, and seeing no use in calling Miss Sydney from her crew, as dame Phelps called them, (for indeed, and indeed, Sir, they are no better,) I persuaded the good woman to go home, which at last she did; but not without calling out as loud as she could; 'I'll make an example of the mistress of this den; she shan't reign long; she has nothing of her own; my brother is not to have his right, by doing wrong; he has lent her his all, like a fool as he is; but he must not get it back in the way of *bribe*, and cheating the rest of her creditors, and there are a fine pack of them, to my certain knowledge. There, Edward, you have heard me; I have spoken the truth, and nothing but the truth; and I want these men, these sham-sham footmen to hear me too; or what come I here for, think you? Aye, and I'll come again, and again; she will not see the last of me quickly, let me tell her; I'll haunt her like an evil spirit. Revenge is sweet, and I'll have my fill before I've done, believe me.'

With that she left the house, and I came directly here.'

Edward ceased; and Mr. Lucas pressed a piece of gold into the honest palm of the friendly fellow, which he with difficulty was persuaded to accept of. The gift, so richly merited, was accompanied with an assurance that, as it was his wish to quit his place for one more creditable, and better suited to principles that did him so much honor, he should have a hearty recommendation to Mr. Neville who would very soon become the husband of Miss Lucas; and no doubt could be entertained but what that gentleman would not only be willing, but happy, to find a situation for him in his future establishment.

Mr. Lucas made it his earnest request that no further notice might be taken at present, and by all means to keep Miss Sydney ignorant of what Mrs. Phelps had uttered in the hall. 'However unworthy she may prove,' he added, 'Miss Sydney is still the sister of my lamented friend. To-morrow I am to see her; let me still hope I may yet preserve her niece from wrong, and her own character from a deeper stigma than what already rests upon it. Till then I must suspend my judgment upon a conduct, which, I have too good reason to fear, she can never be able to justify.'

Edward, wiping away his tears, returned to the hall. Mr. Lucas sought his chamber where he pondered on the work which his mind was so deeply engaged, and, after passing

in contemplation and prayer, he sunk on the pillow, whereon no thorns were placed.

Miss Sydney passed another night of guilty misery, all unconscious of the disgraceful circumstance which had taken place in the hall. Had it proved otherwise—had that lady heard the language of Mrs. Phelps, 'It is possible, Prissy Poll had gone without her lesson, and equally probable Mr. Lucas might have met with a different reception from the very unpleasant one he had the mortification to experience.

But, however Miss Sydney might affect to treat her revered and venerable visitor, what that visitor thought fit to say on the occasion of his unwelcome presence, gave her no small alarm and disturbance.

Her mind was but ill at ease, when Mr. Lucas took his departure, how was her confusion heightened, her apprehensions increased, when her woman, on attending her employ about the person of her mistress at the toilet, instead of praising her lady's looks, as was the wonted custom of Mrs. Deborah Smoothem, that attentive and gentle personage presented her with 'a true and faithful account of the last living words, conduct, and behaviour of the dreaded and formidable Mrs. Jane Phelps.'

Mrs. Smoothem had gathered her intelligence from one of honest Jane's shim-sham notions; with whom, so ran the whisper, Miss Sydney's Abigail was on the most familiar

terms. The alarm her relation created in the bosom of her hearer, was not easily quelled. In evident perturbation, which in vain she strove to check, she dismissed Mrs. Smoother. She had no tears for the loss of her brother; artificial ones. Those she now shed on her own account, were real; with Miss Sydney herself was her idol, which, on every occasion she found far dearer than any other object.

Not so with Mr. Lucas. With a heart impressed for the probable fate of a misguided young creature, whose unfortunate error occasioned the death of one, to whose unexampled friendship he owed every comfort he possessed, could he remain unmindful of her welfare, unmindful of her present and future destiny? No! his philanthropic mind revolted at the selfish idea of battenning upon the good which flowed from the munificence of the other, while the child, slandered, neglected and mysteriously removed beyond the reach of enquiry, might be at that moment, subject to sorrow, peril, and persecution.

Impressed as he was with hope, fear, and doubt, on the event of the morrow, his reflections at length turned toward Le Brun. Would Le Brun remain inactive? The noble-minded, the generous Le Brun! Would he suffer time to multiply evil upon the evil, when they were both called upon to defend? Call upon, even from the tomb! the untimely death of him, who, like themselves had borne another's name, but not, like themselves, with a father's blessing!

CHAPTER XV.

A Scene in a Great Square, in a Great City.

ALTHOUGH self-reproach had no sting to pierce in the bosom of the man, in whose dwelling affection and innocence were on the watch for his wished return, slumber still forsook his pillow, and a long, sleepless, and afflicting night fell to the lot of Mr. Lucas.

At length, the morning arrived, and again he repaired to the house of Miss Sydney ; but, alas ! it was only to strengthen doubt, and increase alarm.

At a very early hour Miss Sydney had left her home, not in her own, but in a hired conveyance ; the driver of which received his directions in a whisper, conveyed to him when he was seated on his box, the lady placed within the carriage, and the blind drawn up.

The only person in the family who was up at the time, was the house-maid. The girl was much surprised at a circumstance so uncommon ; but it was not for her to presume to question her lady.

Curiosity, the inmate of every female bosom, from the duchess to the dairy-maid, set Mrs. Jenny on the fidgets, to acquaint Mrs. Barrow with what she had seen ; regretting at the same time that she could not also narrate what she had heard. She had heard

a whisper, but, alas! to its substance she remained a stranger.

At her usual hour of eleven, Mrs. Smoothem left her chamber, and was soon after seated, in her wonted *snug* way, at her breakfast-table. This pattern for ladies' women was extremely partial to strong bohea, for her morning beverage, which she failed not to meliorate with a small dash of *spirit*, on account of the weak state of her poor stomach, which could not bear the juice of the weed, without such a corrective.

Thus seated, and sipping off the fourth cup of her favorite mixture, she answered to a gentle tap, 'open the door.' No sooner said, than done. The door opened, and in glided the aforesaid Mrs. Jenny.

Equally with her informer, was Mrs. Smoothem disappointed, in not being able to arrive at the knowledge of what was said to the coachman. Jenny, the house-maid, was, however dismissed, with thanks for her attention; but not before she was presented with a full glass of the delectable spirit just mentioned, and which, with many, *many* thanks, Jenny preferred taking *alone*. When Mrs. Smoothem had indulged herself in the same way, she repaired to the dressing-room of her lady.

On her entrance, the first thing that struck her was the toilet, stripped of a variety of expensive baubles.

While she was blessing her stars, and uttering other ejaculations, which were common

On occasions of sudden surprize and vexation, she was joined by Mr. Brilliant.

The table, divested of every ornament of value, became likewise the object of *his* contemplation!

What was to be done? Mr. Brilliant had had the honor of being Miss Sydney's jeweller for several years; for as many years he had also the honor of being her creditor, and at the present moment, he most devoutly wished these united honors had been conferred on any other person than himself.

The sum of Mr. Brilliant's demand was considerable indeed, and his errand to Grosvenor-Square, on that morning, was to lessen it, by taking some of his most costly articles back again.

In an under-tone, Mr. Brilliant uttered a sentence or two, as inarticulate to Mrs. Smoothem as was the *whisper* of Miss Sydney to poor Jenny. By degrees he became a little more audible, and certain words, accompanied with scrutinizing and significant looks, made it appear as if *her* integrity was to be called in question.

Now such looks and such words, not altogether applying to the party for whom they were intended, were certainly improper; for, altho' in the invariable habit of getting all she could, in the way of fawning, flattering, and other convenient arts, with which she was perfectly well acquainted, and in which she was no inconsiderable adept, Mrs. Smoothem was still in

every other respect, as free from stain as a child unborn. Conscious that no charge could lay against her, she failed not, in pretty terms, to assert her innocence; and Mr. Brilliant was brought to confess that she had not 'talked him down,' and that, if he had suspicions, he had no right to utter them.

The united claims of the different women arose to a large amount; but that of Brilliant was in itself a fortune, and as such appeared it had been estimated by the depraved and unprincipled Sydney—a name branded with perpetual stigma—a name which stood foremost in the list of those, whose nightly and infernal orgies reflect eternal disgrace on the world of rank and fashion.

Brilliant next proceeded to her cabinet, lock of which had been forced, and those contents which, by appointment of the fugitive, were to have passed that morning under consideration, had been removed from it. No doubt now remained, but that the credits were plundered, and the plunderer—gone!

No measures were, however, left untried to prevent the flight of the robber from the boundaries of a kingdom, where her offences had rendered her amenable to its violent laws.

The person of Miss Sydney had been years, not a few, pretty conspicuous at all public places—it was not better known than described. The officers of justice failed not to execute their separate and appointed tasks.

her object had conceived her plan with so much caution, and pursued it with so much caution, as finally to baffle all their endeavours, and to render every search abortive.

With every circumstance attending the flight of his mistress, Mr. Lucas had received information, by Edward. The afflicted gentleman attended to the relation, from which he could only draw the most painful conclusion, respecting the probable situation of poor Lucilla.

But he saw its effects disposed of by public auction, and, *these spacious premises to be let or sold*, placed on the doors of the house, which had long been that of infamy, where thousands had been ventured by dupes, and won by sharps, Mr. Lucas could not turn his course towards home. Of all this he had been an interested spectator; nothing, therefore, remained for him, but to leave the metropolis, completely filled in his intent of gratitude, benevolence, and humanity.

To the nightly passenger, dark and desolate appeared the mansion, where late the sparkling lustres, suspended in its spacious apartments, spread their reflection to a wide extent, and caught his astonished gaze, and light him on his way.

At the spacious portal, where well-dressed lacquies so lately crowded on the steps, as thoughtless and as profligate as their ladies and their lords, now, in wretched and broken numbers, folded in a formless heap, guilty

squallid, and wrapped in loathsome rags, peered in the last state of disease, and infatuated the poor wandering female ; who, doubtless once knew the blessings of a home, health, innocence, and, but for the curse of beauty, had never experienced a reverse.

The deserted dwelling of Miss Sydney, late the scene of fashion, folly, and dissipation, held forth an important and mournful memento. There, during her glittering reign, pleasure experienced no pause, her deluded votaries no shame.

Seated in the gilded car, the former frequenters of that dwelling, who could no longer be there no more, might cast a transient glance as they passed the well-known gloomy space, where, in crowded ranks, so lately stood the gaudy equipages of the needy sharper, the credulous dupe, and the thoughtless spendthrift, eager to destroy every future prospect, and to ensure his own destruction.

They might 'cast a transient glance,' but their mind owned no impression. They passed rapidly on, and in rapid whirl, too giddy, or too guilty for reflection. Other haunts received them, where the ball of kindred vice was kept up—haunts which ruin had not visited in its desolating course. Their fate, though suspended, was still fixed—their destruction, though delayed, was still sure.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Father Restored.

ON his return home, Mr. Lucas found letters from Le Brun, which had occasioned the instant departure of Captain Roberts from Image-Place.

To the change of climate, Mr. Le Brun attributed the sudden illness of his daughter, which had taken place the second day after the absence of her husband.

Unwilling to add to the burthen of his mind, already too much depressed for the loss of his friend and patron, she had prevailed on her father to delay an intelligence, which might prevent the completion of his journey. Le Brun allowed it was that of duty and necessity, joined in hopes of her indisposition being speedily removed by proper attention, and submitted to her intreaties.

Mrs. Roberts was, however, disappointed in the flattering expectations she had formed. Her disorder hourly gained strength, to the no small alarm of the physician by whom she was attended, and who could no longer suffer Mr. Le Brun to remain a stranger to his fears respecting his patient.

Actuated by the same motive, her afflicted parent forwarded the unwelcome tidings—on the receipt of which, Captain Roberts took a

asty leave of his friends at Auburn, in a state of mental distress, to be pictured only by those who have beheld, on the couch of sickness and peril, a lovely and amiable partner, with every fear at the full, and every hope nearly extinguished.

The venerable Lucas had been a husband, and the name of father still remained ! He blamed himself for his late sentiments on the conduct of Mr. Le Brun, in not taking a more active part than he had done, in the cause of Lewis Sydney. He felt that his censure had been premature, and unjust ; he had condemned the man, whose virtues had been established on unquestionable testimony ; and all he now wished was, to acknowledge his error, and to clasp him to his bosom.

The nameless and endearing attentions of the best of daughters, preserved, for a time, the mind of the curate of Auburn from sinking into that state of despondency, so fatal, in general, to those who have numbered out their best days, and have advanced to the decline of eventful existence.

The memory of their mutual friend was not held less sacred by the child, than by the father. For a loss so distressing and irreparable, the affliction of Miss Lucas was equally poignant with that of her invaluable parent ; her susceptible bosom harboured a pang equally acute — a regret equally sincere.

To disguise her feelings, was a task to which she had never been accustomed ; but now, the

smile which illumed her countenance, and the serenity which marked her manner, were only assumed. The author of her existence, since his return from London, had, for the first time within the last two or three days, avoided her society. He would frequently rise abruptly from his studies, which he formerly delighted in, and for which it had been his invariable rule to set apart a portion of each revolving day, and leave the unfinished sentence, to ramble amidst the penfive and entangled paths of the adjoining wood; there to give reflection its full range, and to indulge, without a witness, in all the luxury of sorrow.

Was a change so affecting, to be observed by Miss Lucas, without alarm and anxiety?—Certainly not! Was she to sink beneath the impression it occasioned?—No! It was her part to sustain the trial; to bear up, to combat with her own reflections on the same cause, which had proved the source of her drooping parent's present affliction. All this, a strong and cultivated mind set forth as her indispensable duty; she summoned up sufficient fortitude to enable her to persevere; her father had not to say—'wherefore is thy brow clouded, and thine eyes suffused with tears?'—

In the fond hope, that time would at length restore the mind of her parent to its wonted tranquillity, her spirits had hitherto sustained the weight that oppressed them, with some degree of composure; and, while in his presence, had enabled her to disguise her real feelings.

But his melancholy gaining rapid ground, he found the tide of affliction too strong for resistance; and her altered countenance, and visible dejection, too plainly told that peace was a stranger to her bosom.

It has been already remarked of Miss Lucas that, with all the filial tenderness and caution which marks the character of a dutiful and affectionate child, she had endeavoured to conceal from the observance of her parent the anxiety that preyed upon her spirits, and interrupted the mental serenity, which had not before experienced a pause.

Her spotless mind had ever enjoyed the bliss its own purity created; nor could any circumstance, short of the sudden and unhappy change in the father she loved and honored, have disturbed the sacred repose of inborn virtue.

Nor was its tranquillity long suppressed. Her own sentiments occasioned its restoration; they met the ear of an awakened parent, and eventually restored him to himself.

The garden of the cottage bore a penitence character; which every surrounding object more increased. The morning was fine; and after Miss Lucas had taken a silent breakfast with her father, who then left her, as had been his custom since his return from London, to ramble, till the hour of their next meal, in the wood, the young lady took a book from the library, and repaired to her favorite seat at the bottom of the orchard.

Her attention soon became fixed on her

which was Ogilvie's elegant and interesting poem on Providence, when a rust among the foliage that surrounded the altar occasioned her to look up—the visitor Mrs. Goodwin.

Miss Lucas, although a recluse, was too perfect a mistress in the principles of good-breeding even to an intruder, which was not the case in the present instance, not to assume the air of welcome, and lay aside the object of study. Indeed the regard she entertained for Mrs. Goodwin was both ardent and sincere ; that lady was now more than ever entitled to friendship and esteem. She resembled her former self in nothing but her beauty ; of which she was no longer vain, but which remained still undiminished.

Speaking herself by her friend, she said, ' If I interrupt the solitude of my beloved monitor, I will depart on obtaining your reply to the message I am charged with. The birth-day of the brother so providentially restored to me, is place in a few days. It is Mr. Goodwin's will, and for which I thank him, to keep a house on the occasion ; he says he dare not solicit the presence of your father ; but he cherishes a hope, that he will permit that of dearest Harriet.'

' This proof of Mr. Goodwin's respect to my father and myself,' replied Miss Lucas, ' will not be forgotten. I am flattered by his invitation ; but, circumstanced as I am, I cannot comply with it. Your silence tells me you

have already conceived my insurmountable objection. Oh, my love!—my poor father claims all my attention, and fills up every thought. My nights pass away in broken slumbers; my days in unceasing alarm. Can I see him unhappy, and harbour a feeling allied to joy? Impossible!—While in his presence, I endeavour all I can to appear what I am not, *cannot* be! I perceive my strength yielding in degrees, too perceptibly; and I fear he will soon become a witness of the grief beyond my efforts longer to conceal; and that of a hopeless affliction we shall both become victims!—Through the foliage of this bower I behold the wood he daily visits, but dare not follow him thither—sacred are his sorrows—I *may* regret, but must not presume to speak to them.

A short silence ensued. A deep drawn sigh escaped the bosom of Mrs. Goodwin! With a pensive glance she turned toward the dutiful mourner, and said, ‘my reproving heart tells me, that every good parent has a worthy claim on the duty and affection of a child. The source of anguish to her, to whom I owe my existence, what have I not to bewail? I sought not to lessen, but to increase her sufferings—but for my wilful error, I might still have owned a mother!’

‘In the abodes of pure felicity, unalloyed and eternal, the fainted spirit of your long-suffering parent is at peace.’

The heart of the depressed Harriet was too full, to say more on a subject so distressing to

his feelings. The friends proceeded in silence towards the cottage, Miss Lucas retired to her chamber, and Mrs. Goodwin to her home.

On this day, the curate of Auburn went not to the wood unknown to his daughter. He had seated himself on a bench, at the termination of a winding alley, and had overheard the conversation in the alcove.

Miss Lucas had not remained long in her chamber, before she received a summons to attend her father in the garden-parlour.

On her entering the room, Mr. Lucas was engaged in perusing a letter he had just received. Without taking his eyes from its contents, he said, 'sit down, my best child.' The letter I am reading is from Mr. Neville; he has gained his law-suit, by which his fortune, already ample, will receive a considerable addition. But his worth exceeds all *wealth*, and with delight and exultation equal to his own, I look forward to the day, in which I shall have to hail him *son*.'

Her father spoke with a mild energy—joy smoothed his venerable brow, and his inward satisfaction shone forth in his altered looks and demeanour. Miss Lucas beheld him with timid wonder, which prevented immediate utterance; at length words found their way, and she exclaimed—'I was not prepared for this!—I bend with gratitude to heaven; my father, my dear, my valued father, will again be happy!'

Mr. Lucas could only say, 'To thee, Har-

riety, does thy father owe his restoration ! This auspicious morning, I listened in secret to the voice of my child. It proved a timely call ; it has set my error before me, and I have only to perform my duty to preserve her, who will crown with joy the evening of my existence.

To complete the harmony of the day, and still more to heighten the felicity which now reigned in the cottage, a messenger arrived in the evening, with the welcome intelligence, that Mrs. Roberts was pronounced out of danger, and that, on her recovery, the family would visit Auburn.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Temple.

THE rising sun had no sooner enriched the summits of the hills of verdure which surrounded the flourishing village of Auburn, on the birth-day of Captain Roberts, than the gates of Image-Place were opened, with a welcome to its industrious peasantry.

The morning of that day was ushered in by the tinkle of a solitary bell ; which, for ages, had been suspended within the humble tower of that sacred edifice, so charmingly described by our poet, Goldsmith, in his interesting and

popular poem.—Never had it founded more musical in the ears of the venerable curate, than on the present occasion.

The tranquillity which reigned within the boundaries of his elegant and secluded habitation, was still heightened by the presence of Mr. Neville, who had arrived there on the evening preceding the appointed festivity. The free-will offering of Goodwin, he held likewise as that of *peace*.

Previous to their entering the carriage, Mr. Lucas said to his daughter, ‘endeavour, my love, to be happy during your visit. By way of atonement for my late error, I have made it my study how best to oblige my loved, my valuable child. Mr. Neville and myself have agreed to become the guests of Mr Goodwin on the present occasion, and to give the past to oblivion. His present treatment of the sister of our gallant seaman must be encouraged and rewarded. He has expressed a wish for my presence on this day, which he dedicates to mirth and festivity, to do honor to him in whom our Sydney delighted.’—‘Yes, my Harriet,’ rejoined Mr. Neville, ‘your friend is the sister of a brave, an excellent young man; and, although the conduct of her husband at one time rendered her unhappy, has it not produced a reform in her own?—Yes, my love, it has rendered her worthy of being the companion of the dearest object of my affections; of her, for whom I live; of her, for whose comfort and repose were the sacrifice

indispensable, I would willingly lay down this existence, on which she confers the crown of human felicity.'

On the arrival of the party at Image-Place, every attention, every look of its delighted owners, expressed the deep sense of gratitude with which they were impressed. The hours passed away in harmony and mutual satisfaction; and, as that of departure drew nigh, Mr. Neville informed Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, that he was soon to receive a gift from the hands of Mr. Lucas, which would complete his sum of sublunary good; and that it was the wish of the parent of his Harriet, as well as his own, that they would be present on the occasion, 'The nuptial day,' added he, 'will likewise complete the nineteenth year of the bride. Your presence, therefore, at the church, and your company at the cottage, will at once confer obligation, and cement esteem.'

The birth, and nuptial day arrived, and passed away in all that satisfaction and happiness, which it was expected would attend it; but, as how looked the bride, how smiled the bride-groom, how many tender speeches passed, and how many whisperings of admiration took place, are no way essential to be detailed at the present moment, the author will, with the leave of that portion of his fair readers, who may have formed expectations of the kind, pursue his history.

After the union, a happy month glided imperceptibly away; and, during that period,

Mr. Lucas, at the request of the new-married pair, had taken up his abode at the seat of Mr. Neville, which that gentleman had lately purchased, and which was situated within a mile of his cottage. The owner of that serene retirement, on beholding his children's increasing felicity, became more and more tranquil in himself. Frequently would he express his regret for his departed friend; while his son and daughter, perceiving the pleasure their parent took in dwelling on his many virtues, suffered not an evening to pass, without their bearing the principal feature of conversation at Lockwood-Vale.

On the first morning after his return to his cottage, the curate arose at an early hour, refreshed by a night of calm and unbroken repose.

As he descended to the breakfast-parlour, he gave a sigh, on the recollection that he should meet with no one there to bear him company, and that he should sit down to his once favourite meal, a stranger to the embrace and the greeting he had once experienced. Thus impressed, how agreeably was he deceived, on beholding his attentive child, preparing his usual beverage of new milk and dried fruits, with her own hand, while Mr. Neville was assisting her in the pious employ!

The curate's entrance had not been perceived. He contemplated for a space the assiduous of his welcome guests, who were interrupted only by the exclamation, 'blessed,

blest pair!'—They turned round, and on their knees, implored the blessing of their loved, their venerable father. 'Yes, my children,' replied the grateful minister of his faith, 'may my blessings, and those of heaven, be multiplied upon you!—Let me too kneel, and let our feelings, at this moment of rapture, make up our morning's tribute of praise and thanksgiving!'

Scarcely had they risen from their prostration, when a post-chaise drove up rapidly to the door of the cottage, from which alighted Captain and Mrs. Roberts, with their respectable father, Le Brun. Mrs. Roberts was welcomed by Mrs. Neville with that sweetness so peculiar to herself; and in a manner the most impressive, Captain Roberts recommended Mr. Le Brun to the particular friendship and regard of the worthy curate. A messenger was immediately dispatched to Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, requesting they would join the happy party at an early dinner. The day passed in social harmony, and the new-comers returned with their relations to Image-Place.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Palmistry and Pilfering.

THE happiness Mr. Lucas enjoyed in the felicity of those immediately around him,

considerably allayed by the constant recollection of the daughter of his relation, his friend, and his benefactor. The unknown fate of the undiscovered Louisa, impressed his mind with the most melancholy anxiety, and, in his hours of retirement, preyed so much on his spirits, as visibly to impair his health. The scenes before him did not a little contribute to an increase of these feelings ; every thing reminded him of the admiral and of his daughter, and embittered all his simple enjoyments.

The morning after the guests had left the cottage, Mr. Lucas took his usual walk, at the extremity of which, and near the public road, he was accosted by a little boy for charity.

‘ And who are *you* ?’—said the worthy Mr. Lucas, as he surveyed the extended hand and curly head of a beautiful child, who, clad in mean attire, solicited his charity, with an air of humility which appeared to be sustained by a sort of hereditary pride, sinking under dire necessity. His very look bespoke conscious superiority.

‘ I am a beggar boy,’ replied he ; while his rosy cheeks announced his utter ignorance of the meaning of his expression ; and his cheerful smile proclaimed the contentment that dignified his humble lot.

‘ And your name ?’ continued Mr. Lucas.

‘ Alfred !’

‘ A high name for a low station !—Hem ?—How came you by that name ?’

‘Indeed, Sir, I cannot tell ;—but my father, who is hard by, perhaps can.’

At the same moment, a swarthy, discomfited human being, approached them. Her appearance, for it was a female, was so disgusting, that Mr. Lucas turned, with a frown of displeasure, from the ready smile with which she accosted him. He was on his road home, when the child, quickly following his steps, exclaimed, in a note of woe, ‘pray, Sir, give me a half-penny ;—I am very hungry.’

The gypsey, who was attentively watching, placed the fore-finger of her right-hand, on the palm of her left, and desired Mr. Lucas would cross it with a bit of silver, and she would tell him of marvellous good things.

With a stern aspect, he bade her be gone.—She obeyed, and left him. But the little Alfred was not so easily satisfied. Again, with a beseeching look, he repeated that he was hungry. ‘Imp of idleness,’ exclaimed Mr. Lucas, ‘think not to impose on me your ready tale, and that I shall, by encouraging you, set such an example before the children of my parishioners. Go, child of duplicity—learn an honest trade, and you will never feel hunger.’

A something like reproach gathered in the heart of Mr. Lucas for the harsh words which he had uttered ; and, on reaching the stile, he involuntarily turned his head, and perceived that the gypsey was beating the boy, and that he was crying. He returned, and enquired what offence the child had committed ?—The

asked the question, and vainly attempted to silence Alfred, who exclaimed, while his tears almost choked utterance—
 'Mammy beat me, because I did not follow you home; and she always does, when I can't get any money. Martha is much kinder to me than mammy; but Martha is sick, in a barn, about a mile off.'

'And where is the barn?' said Mr. Lucas—
 'and what is her complaint?'

The woman answered, that their gang was roving about the country;—that it had dispersed into various counties, and was to collect itself, in three months from that period, when every account of expenditure and profit would be made, and they would have the yearly merry meeting, held sacred from time immemorial, by the race of gypsies. She further added, that Martha had a very particular affection for the boy Alfred, whom she sometimes committed to her care, when the infirmities of age precluded her, as they frequently did, from begging for him herself. Mr. Lucas enquired if she was really his mother?—to which she answered in the negative; and told him it was one of their rules, that the children should always call the woman 'mammy,' who at the time was with them.

Mr. Lucas listened to this simple tale, which had unwittingly arrested his attention; but was resolved not to be subdued by it; and, hastily throwing into the boy's hand a sixpence of a remarkable form, which had for

some months lain in his pocket, and he held no other silver about him, held up his stick in a threatening attitude, and charged both mammy and boy, as they valued their safety, never to molest him more.'

He returned home with a pensive mind. The image of little Alfred seemed to pursue him ; and, while he reflected on the beauty of his person, and on his humble petition, his plaintive voice seemed to vibrate on the ear of Mr. Lucas. 'Have I then been unkind to this child of sorrow ?' he mournfully repeated to himself. 'He did but ask, and I denied him. —But did I deny him in the same gentle accent, with which he besought my aid ?—Alas, no ! —I denied him with the authoritative voice of superiority ; and, forgetting at the moment, that I was myself but a subservient slave to the will of *my* superiors, commanded him, in a tone that I had no right to usurp, '*never to molest me more !*'

By a thousand nameless, winning, ways, Mrs. Neville had made it her constant practice to subdue the natural effervescence of her father's mind, and to mould it into the placid form in which her own had been perfected—he related this little history to her, and she expressed an earnest desire to see the boy, and to enquire into the situation of poor Martha.—Dinner was scarcely over, when she went to her chamber, to equip herself for her search after them, and Mr. Hodges, a neighbouring farmer, was announced.

“I come,” said he, “my worthy Sir, to report to you, that a desperate gang of gypsies has for some days past infested our neighbourhood; I have heard several complaints of them; and, yesterday, I perceived them to be sitting round a large fire in one of my fields. I was going to expel them, when one of the women ran up to me, and intreated that I would not advance, as I should terrify one of her companions, who was seized by labor, and that, as soon as she was delivered, it was their intention to depart. I accordingly withdrew—and, towards evening, returned there, with one of my men, whom I had ordered to bring something comfortable for the poor creature. The company was gone; and, by the side of the fire, which was yet burning, I discovered the skin, newly stripped, of one of my fine old wethers, on which these people had been regaling; and which, to prevent my seeing, had caused them to invent the lie by which I was deceived. Farmer Mercer’s wife had compassionated them; and imprudently suffered one of their children to enter the house; but he had not long disappeared, before she missed a silver tea-spoon, that lay on the table. These depredations, worthy, Sir, must be in future prevented, and I come to request from you, a warrant, for committing the vagabonds to the house of correction.”

At that moment, Mrs. Neville entered the room, and Mr. Lucas repeated to her the business on which Mr. Hodges was come. This,

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however, did not prevent her from making her proposed ramble, her curiosity, and some better feelings, having been greatly excited by her father's account of Alfred and Martha.

Her errand was, however, fruitless—she had been to the barn, but neither sick woman, boy, nor any vestige of the fortune-telling tribe remained, save the feathers of the various fowls they had purloined, to the great annoyance of the villagers of Auburn, who had, it seems, on the same morning, driven them away with their cudgels; but not before they had committed a most daring outrage on the stately premises of Image-Place.

The warrant, therefore, which had readily been granted by Mr. Lucas, who, since the death of the admiral, had been in the commission of the peace, was of no avail. The purloining tribe had removed into another county; for, they well knew when they had committed depredations sufficient to render migration necessary, and when to be visible, and when to be concealed.

CHAPTER XIX.

Louisa Sydney,

WE will now come to the long-wished-for long expected Louisa Sydney whom we left run-

being the giddy round of dissipation in the house of her vitiated aunt, and but too well inclined to attend to, and follow, her example. Light as the lightest breeze, her mind fluttered over the transitory perfumes of summer, but foresaw not that the storm of adversity would blight, with the chill of winter, the early season of her days. While the mistaken, and too-indulgent admiral, continued to supply her with the constant and exorbitant demands made on him by his worthless sister, she saw nothing to regret, nothing more to wish for, than a continuance of her present happiness. The sentiment of love, that always counterbalances in susceptible female minds, every other, was a stranger to the bosom of Louisa. She favored a few, and flirted with all her aunt's visitors, without having seen one on whom she thought of fixing her choice; and indeed, the young men of Miss Sydney's society were, either too much in love with themselves to regard Louisa, or too much devoted (which was more frequently the case) to the trade of duping others, or being duped themselves, to think seriously on any other object, however lovely and interesting. When at length, a letter of severe reproof from the admiral was delivered to his daughter, in her aunt's dressing-room, she wept bitterly; and putting it into Miss Sydney's hand, while her face, deluged in tears, reclined on that lady's bosom, she expressed the strongest sense of self-conviction and regret, for the pain she had inflicted on the

best of parents ; then, with a sweet simplicity, implored her aunt's permission to reveal to him, that the large sums lately sent her had been *lent* to herself—not thrown away in the foolish manner he imagined !

Words could but ill express the confusion of Miss Sydney, on a request so unexpected, and to her, so extraordinary. That Louisa should presume to *recollect*, even for a moment, such a circumstance, was of itself, too provoking to admit of any palliative ; but that she should form any idea of explaining to her father *how* the money had been employed, was so very foreign to any Miss Sydney had entertained, that it became necessary for her to plead a nervous head-ach, and to request that she might be left to herself, till her spirits were enabled to reflect on the most probable means of reconciling her *dear* brother to her *still dearer* niece !

The ill-fated and credulous Louisa believed the heart of her aunt, and, indeed, the heart of all human beings, to be formed exactly of the same materials as her own. She accordingly rejoiced in the fair promise held out to her, and ventured not to begin a letter to her father, until sanctioned by her aunt in what manner she was to address him.

After waiting for several days the promised and procrastinated advice of Miss Sydney on the subject, she was roused from her flattering dream of hope, by a letter of a more serious complexion than she had ever yet received. It was as follows :

Though distant, I am not ignorant of your conduct, and have been apprized on authority, which I dare not doubt, of your boundless extravagance ; that the various sums of money I repeatedly sent, to discharge the debts of which you complained, have been lavished at the gaming-table ; and that not one of them is paid. You have now nearly reduced me to the same poverty as yourself ; and it is time that I should put a stop to a career, which, however youthful, seems fraught with folly, if not already hardened into vice. Alas ! my child, for my child I *feel* you are, can you not pity your poor old father ? Let not my mutilated body bear a more mutilated mind ; but restore to me my heart's dearest blessing, pure and unblemished, as when I first imprudently indulged her, in suffering her person to be fashioned by the world, as I fondly hoped her heart was fashioned by her creator. Return to me, my child, and renounce the errors of youth. The first part of my letter may appear harsh. I began it as a judge ; but I must conclude it as a father ! Here you shall find a secure asylum, and my first embrace shall obliterate all remembrance of the past. I will go myself for you to London, in the course of the next week, and hope you will not murmur on finding yourself, once more, in the arms of your father.

A. Sydney.

This letter fell like a thunderbolt on the

heart-stricken Louisa. She had given, with her last money, a list of her debts to her aunt, who had faithfully promised to discharge them. What now was she to do? To reveal the truth, would be to create a breach between her father and his sister, were she believed by the former; but, from some hints dropped by Miss Sydney within the last few days, she had every reason to suspect, that an imputation of falsehood would be added to those offences, which had been already so greatly magnified. Louisa could not but observe the calm indifference with which Miss Sydney surveyed both her and the fatal letter. After a pause, that lady said—‘I have long apprehended, Louisa, that this would happen. You have certainly incurred debts beyond your fortune, and it is wholly out of my power to pay them. With the money you *say* you gave me to discharge them, recollect I was obliged to compound your debts of honor. How many of them still remain unsatisfied, you best can tell. I do not advise you to go to your father. I speak as your friend. I know my brother better than you do; and, although he is a worthy and good man, he has peculiarities to which you could not submit, after having been in the long habit of enjoying the pleasures of London. Your father, child, has not an idea on this side the sea; he will endeavour to marry you to some brute of a sailor, who, by way of appreciating your accomplishments, will tell you, that you are a tight, well-rigged little

frigate; and that he will tow you into a safe harbour, where he'll moor you along-side himself, and bear all weathers to windward.'

With such conversation did the wary Miss Sydney beguile her innocent and unoffending niece. Often did that faultless, yet unfortunate young lady, ponder on the dreary vicissitude which had succeeded to her former situation of innate virtue, and to the glorious consciousness of acting up to the duty of a child.— All these fair prospects seemed at once, to be blighted by the contaminating breath of corruption. Innocence was beguiled, nature was adulterated—and what remained for her, but the pungent regret, of having grievously disappointed a fond and indulgent father in his dearest expectations?

The mind of Louisa was not able to contend with the conflicting sentiments it endured. At one moment, pale and exhausted, she deplored their source—at another, she gloried in her aunt's precepts and example, and lamented the foolish weakness of her own heart. Such are the transitions of human nature!

In the letter which had given her so much concern, her father had inclosed a bank-bill for one hundred pounds; and it fortunately happened, that the preceding evening, though she had, as usual been a loser, she had received one hundred and twenty guineas, a debt of honor, which had been some time due. Soon after the conversation she had held with her aunt, that lady was summoned to an interview with

ted to their respective homes—there to be received by yawning servants, empty floors, new-washed and petrifying apartments, and every other *comfort* of fashionable life.

In the splendid mansion of Grosvenor Square, all these things were widely reversed. The immense heat, and variety of *odours*, exhaled from the numerous guests, had made it necessary to undraw the curtains, put up the *saltes*, and command the servants, under pain of everlasting displeasure, to extinguish every spark that was now blazing, in obedience to the will which had just before commanded fire. These servants, all alive, had anticipated the next day's labour, and longed to borrow from the present *night*, a few hours, that would, in different families, have belonged to the coming *day*; and became busily employed with their soap, furniture-brushes, and other necessary utensils; at the end of which preliminary, were to succeed a *snug* supper, *snug* bottle, &c. &c. which were to send them reeling to their rooms; and an hour's additional repose would be granted to them in the morning, to compensate for their *nightly* fatigue. Mrs. Mawson, the house-keeper, and Mrs. Smoothem, Miss Sydney's woman, were of opinion, that as the under-servants had already witnessed their having frequently made too free with their lady's cellar, it was best to make *friends* with them—although it was truly necessary that a *proper* distance should be kept up in the day time.

At the afore-mentioned hour, then Louisa

took leave of her aunt, until the revolving time, when it was expected they would meet at breakfast ; and she retired to her chamber, with heavy eyes, a distracted mind, and every other fatal appendage of an agonized and almost bursting heart. She laid her head on her pillow ; but perceived, that the sleep which had, uninvited assailed, now forsook her. The time which nature had devoted towards invigorating her body, art, at this period, exhausted to invigorate her mind ; she was as one new-born ; self-reproach stared at her with an eye of malignity ; she fancied that every passing acquaintance was the foe who had been zealously endeavouring to prejudice her father against her ; and loathed, with abhorrence, every frequenter of Miss Sydney's house, as a visitor who wished to subjugate her honor, and destroy her future peace.

The morning appeared, and her fate yet remained undecided. What was to be done ? It was necessary to determine on something, and that speedily. To renounce her father's sister, and that renunciation to be made in the hour of her distress, was a sentiment so repugnant to the mind of Louisa Sydney, that her heart revolted at the bare idea. To continue with her, she felt was impossible. This was the moment for decision, and she resolved to quit immediately, and for ever, a house in which her liberty was perpetually endangered, and which, if once destroyed would be attended with the most fatal consequences to her father, as well as to herself.

As soon as she perceived all was quiet in the house, she made a large bundle of those things she esteemed most valuable, and softly put it up one of the lower windows, beckoned to the watch-man, who knew her, and made no hesitation in assisting her into the street, and conducting her to a coach; she slipped a guinea into his hand, and desired him not to betray her, as she was going to meet her lover, and make all possible speed with him to reach Gretna-Green. She ordered the coachman to convey her to the Golden Cross, Charing Cross—and, finding herself nearly sinking under the bodily and mental fatigue she had lately experienced, she ordered a bed to be prepared for her, and soon lost the sense of her sufferings in sweet and peaceful sleep.

When she awoke, she found herself so much refreshed as to be able to ruminate on what was best to be done. She determined on quitting the metropolis, and her heart became lighter as she looked forward to the hope of better days. After a solitary dinner, she amused herself by watching, from her window, the variety of objects, which in that part of the town are so conspicuous. A mail-coach was standing at the door. She made enquiries, and learned that it was a Bristol one, going and set out at eight o'clock the same evening. 'And why not,' she said to herself, 'Bristol, as well as any other place? In large cities, the stranger escapes the eye of observation—and I have long wished to see the vaunted plain.'

Somerſetſhire.' She rang the bell, and was answered that one place was vacant. She took it in the name of Miſs Serlby, and at the appointed hour, found herſelf on the road to Briſtol, with three gentlemen, whom ſhe had beheld enough of at the door, to convince her that ſhe was unknown to them.

Nothing remarkable occurred during the journey, and every attention was paid to her, that politeneſs could dictate, by theſe ſons of Hibernia, for ſuch ſhe found they all were, and that they were all engaged on the ſame errand, which was, to pick up, if poſſible, a comfortable heiress for each of them, at Bath.

Finding that all attempts to draw from her the hiſtory of who, and what ſhe was, were ineffectual; (and indeed it was very improbable that any one of the three ladies they were in purſuit of, ſhould be travelling, unattended there,) they gave up all farther enquiry; and, though they were uniformly friendly and attentive to her during their progreſs, yet the converſation they ſupported among themſelves convinced her, that they were of the ſame deſcription of perſonages, as thoſe who had been in the conſtant habit of frequenting her aunt's card parties, and that they were all three influenced by the ſame double motive, of ſucceeding with the heiress, and the gaming-table.

Arrived at the celebrated Buſh, kept by the no leſs celebrated Mr. Weeks, the honor of Miſs Serlby's company was ſolicited to diſſipate with her fellow-travellers. She could not

any more impropriety in accepting that invitation, than in having been shut up with these gentlemen all night in the coach, and having been, contrary to her wish, franked by them on the road ; and she was the more inclined to accept the obliging offer, as they had informed on the road, their intention of setting out early in the morning, in a post-chaise and four, for Bath ; and that dashing vehicle, with which they meant to enter the walls of Bladud, was probably the reason why they had chosen the Bristol mail.

After changing her travelling-dress to an elegant muslin one, she descended to their sitting-room, where she found only Captain Dillon, whose dress had undergone as thorough an alteration as her own. He bowed respectfully on her approach, and, presenting her with a chair, seated himself by her. He informed her, that the other gentlemen would be with them immediately, and proposed their all viewing the town, as the day, though cold, was remarkably fine. Miss Serlby bowed assent, and her eyes met those of Captain Dillon. She thought she had never seen such an alteration made by dress ; for, although he had, at first, appeared to her as a handsome young man, she now perceived he was uncommonly so. Perhaps the same idea upon dress floated equally on *his* mind. I will not take upon me to assert that Louisa sighed inwardly, and wished herself an heiress, and at Bath ! But when the other gentlemen joined them, with

here, likewise, handsome young men, and who had undergone the same change in their dress, Louisa certainly, though I dare say involuntarily, drew nearer to Captain Dillon than to the others, in hopes to avoid the offer she did not wish to accept of either of their arms. Captain Dillon, with great alacrity, requested to hand her down stairs, and *his* arm she was consequently *obliged* to lay hold of.

The party first visited the noble cathedral. The sublime epitaph on Mrs. Mason fixed the attention of Miss Serlby, who gazed on it in silent sorrow. She took her pencil, and began to transcribe the lines on the back of a letter; and had already written,

“ Take, holy earth!—

when Captain Dillon, gently drawing both pencil and paper from her hand, continued :

“ All that my soul holds dear!—

and gave it to her. His companions were engaged in surveying the no less beautiful monument of Sterne's Eliza, while he asked her, with an expressive look, whether it were necessary for him to add any more? She blushed, put the unfinished epitaph into her pocket, resolving to take some other opportunity of completing it, and turned to the other gentleman, who declared, that their visiting the hot-wells was indispensable, and requested her permission to call a hackney-coach, having just two hours left before dinner, to satisfy their

curiosity. To the wells then they proceeded, and were gratified beyond their expectations by the enchanting scenery which surrounded them. A fine West-Indiaman, which was understood to be the *Fanny*, Captain *Baker*, majestically glided down the beauteous *Avon*, whose peopled banks filled them with wonder and admiration. The stupendous rocks of *St. Vincent*—the contrasted, and elegant architecture of the *Crescent*—and the circulating library, kept by the astonishing, and most interesting, *Mrs. Anne Yearly*, formed a variety of objects, charmingly inviting to the eye, and sweetly gratifying to the mind.

They returned to the *Bush*, where they took of an elegant dinner; for every one who has been at *Bristol*, knows that 'the good things of this world,' are no where more plentifully found. A chicken-turtle, and various other productions of the west, with wines of superior excellence, proved the truth of what she had frequently heard, that the *Irish* are generous to an excess in their table; and the gentlemen, though probably, like the rest of their countrymen, fond of their bottle, had too much politeness to forget that a lady was their guest; and proposed going to the play, as the manner the most pleasing to her, of passing the evening. It was late when they entered the house, which was crowded in every part. *Mr. Inledon* was the powerful magnet of attraction, and the audience was loudly encoring '*Poor Jack*,' while the box-keeper

was vociferating for places, and a jovial crew of the gods above, were joining him in full chorus. The merits of that incomparable singer are too well known, to need animadversion—but certain it is, that his wonderful powers had been hitherto thrown away on Louisa, as they constantly are on every fine lady, who attends the theatre, without knowing what play is represented there—and who, when her box is deserted by the beau or beaus, whom she went purposely to meet, yawns away her precious moments—slips into her carriage—and declares on her return home, that ‘*Incedon sang very well, indeed.*’

The heart of Louisa was anticipating the morning’s farewell. A sort of pensive melancholy had lately found its way there; and Mr. Incedon’s song of ‘the streamlet that flows round her cot,’ created, in that heart, a taste for music, and a desire for solitary reflection.

Captain Dillon was so particularly attentive during the evening to Miss Serlby, that the other gentlemen could not fail to perceive it; and Captain Grady, for these gentlemen were all equally *dubbed* Captains, in compliance with the order of the day, being the oldest of the three, failed not to make some quaint observations; which, from bearing a moral tendency, and being particularly addressed to Miss Serlby, might alarm her feelings, but could not wound her delicacy. This gentleman slightly hinted to her, that Captain Dillon was, in a manner, intrusted by his relations, to his care; owing

more particularly to a slender relationship between them, than to any great disparity of age or acquirements. Captain Dillon's attentions were certainly not unwelcome to her, but they added to the few short sentences dropped by Captain Grady, impressed her mind with a multiplicity of passing ideas, wholly contradictory of each other. Every moment was productive of something more favourable to her first opinion of Dillon :—He was handsome, engaging, sentimental.—Such at least he appeared to Louisa, who at once perceived in him, a sublimity of character, with which she had been, she thought, till then, unacquainted.

When the play was over, our party returned to the Bush, and partook of an elegant supper, soon after which, Louisa arose to retire. Captains Grady and M'Donnell respectfully proffered to her their good wishes—but a gentle pressure from the hand of Dillon, operated more powerfully on her feelings. Though fatigued by her journey, and anxious respecting the uncertainty of her future fate, Dillon was uppermost in her thoughts, or rather wholly possessed her mind. After a troubled night, she arose early, and descended to the sitting-room, expecting to take a solitary breakfast there; but to her great astonishment, found her three friends, who had changed their intention with regard to the hour of reaching Bath. The distance being so short, it was necessary for them to continue where they were.

until the proper time that would usher them with eclat to the White-Hart; and to this important consideration, Miss Serlby was indebted for a few more hours of their society.

The morning was wet and cold. The gentlemen proposed to visit the billiard-table, but common politeness exacted that one of them should remain with the lady, and that one, it is scarcely necessary to observe, was Captain Dillon. He took that opportunity of lamenting, that his situation did not accord with his sentiments, which would urge him, he said, to throw himself at her feet; but that he was a younger brother, and had spent in his youth that, which were he now in possession of, would be sufficient to make him comfortable with the woman of his choice. He abstained from throwing out any hints respecting *her* fortune; for how was it possible, that a girl, of consequence enough to be an object, would travel, unattended, in a mail-coach? No, no; his vanity was flattered by the preference she had visibly shewn him; but a flirtation for the evening, and to come off handsomely, was all the project he had formed; and, at the very moment that his eyes were rivetted with tenderness and regret on Louisa, he was anticipating an heiress at Bath, and the young spend-thrifts whom he hoped to hook at the gaming-table.

Alas! with Louisa it was far different. Her heart had received its first impression, and she saw not the duplicity of Dillon. She applauded

his candor ; wished she had a world of wealth to bestow on him ; and, as she had purposed, as she said at breakfast, that she expected letters directed to the post-office, she made herself certain that two days would not pass, before he would take the hint, and convince her that *his heart* had felt the same pang that hers received at parting.

As soon as the gentlemen were gone, Louisa enquired for, and was recommended to, a genteel lodging, where she determined, for the present, at least to fix her abode. Having agreed with the maid of the house, to attend upon her, as it was her intention, she said, not to see any company, she passed several weeks without interruption, during which, she had the constancy to go daily to the post-office, in hopes of receiving letters from Dillon, but none such arrived. She had frequently projected writing to her father, and longed to gain intelligence of her aunt ; but the days slipped away, until the returning spring reminded her, that the closeness of the street in which she lived, would prove injurious to her health ; that the people of the house, although civil and attentive, wanted that polish, which alone can render comfortable society elegant ; and she gave the first, as her only reason, for one day declaring to them, that during her frequent rambles, in the beautiful grounds of Lord de Clifford, at King's-Weston, she had extended one of them, to the charming village of Shirehampton ; and had seen, on a neat little cot-

take there, a paper, which signified it was to be his. She had even gone too far to retract, for she had hired the house, on condition, of her character's answering the enquiry that would be made into it the next morning by its proprietors.

Her present landlady, could have nothing to allege against her plan, but the distress of parting with her. Louisa, too, felt affected; but the impression was only momentary, for their acquaintance had been short; and the landlady was too much busied throughout the day, in her domestic concerns, to devote any considerable part of it to her lodger.

The curiosity and most minute inquiries of her new landlord being answered to the extent of his wishes, she took possession of his house, and passed a great part of the summer in those solitary perambulations, which afford the mind opportunity for investigation and instruction; and, by wholly devoting herself to retirement, turned the current of her ideas into their proper channel and enjoyed the society of her books, with a pure delight, which the mansion in Grosvenor-Square had never afforded her.

Here she pondered on the father she had so ungratefully requited; on the aunt, who had instigated her movements, but who was now, perhaps, as solitary a wanderer as herself; and sometimes, if not often, on the deceitful Dillon, who had so artfully inveigled the choicest sentiments of her breast, while his own were, to a certainty, impenetrable. These thoughts re-

conciled her mind to sublunary disappointment. She began to cherish the idea, that truth was absorbed in falsehood ; and, renouncing her favorable sentiments of Disgrace, vainly imagined, that she had renounced the whole world.

CHAPTER XXI.

Further Continuation.

THUS wore away many revolving months, and no change had taken place in the situation of Louisa. On a fine autumnal morning, she had crossed the ferry, to wander over the little village of Pill, and was stepping out of it on her return, when she perceived several gentlemen standing at the door of Lamplighter's Hall, one of whom, of whose face only she had a recollection, accosted her by her own name, and enquired, to what fortunate accident he owed a rencontre so agreeable?—Louisa would have avoided him ; but she immediately recollected that it was necessary for her to reveal to him her change of name ; to request that he would conceal her real one, otherwise she should appear to her neighbourhood, by which she was respected, in the character of an adventurer. They were now within a few yards

at her own door—she desired him to walk in, and discovered that he was an old acquaintance of her aunt's—had a slender knowledge of her father—was a man of tolerable property, and she believed, of unblemished reputation. The very idea, of once more seeing a person, with whom she could freely converse on the subject of her family, on which she had been so long constrained to remain silent, and who had known her in better days, was a comfort to the oppressed mind of Louisa; and she hesitated not to reveal every circumstance relative to herself, from the period of leaving her aunt to the present hour.

Mr. Johnstone heard her with attention—faithfully promised not to betray her secret—and took his leave, being under an engagement with the rest of his party, to go on a short excursion into Wales; but assured her, that he would return by the way of Bristol, purposely to consult with her, on the most efficacious plan for restoring her to her friends, and to society.

He had not left her many minutes, before a letter was brought her from Mr. Johnstone—who guessing, he said, at the low state of her finances, had taken the liberty to inclose two bank-notes, each of fifty pounds value, of which he begged she would make use, until such time as she would have it in her power to repay a much larger sum, which she would always find ready at her command. Such generosity overpowered her. The dread of want-

ing money had been one of the cares that pressed hard upon her mind, and was one of the principal reasons that had prevented her writing to her father. An application to him, after all that had passed, would have carried with it an appearance of self-interest, of which the generous soul of Louisa was incapable.

At the time of this seasonable and unexpected supply, she was not in possession of two pounds, and had, more than once, seriously thought of offering herself, as a teacher, at one of the celebrated boarding-schools ; an innate pride had hitherto withheld her ; she now began to rejoice, that she had found a friend, and anticipated his return, with that fond delight so natural to a grateful and affectionate mind, which feels the sense of obligation, and the ambition of repaying it.

Mr. Johnstone made his appearance at Shillinghampton some days before his appointed time. It was early in the morning, and Louisa prevailed on him to pass the day with her. How prone is a generous mind to imprudent confidence !—In her explanation of the little history of herself to Mr. Johnstone, the idea nearest to her thoughts had its place. He questioned her, as to the state of her heart, and she acknowledged to have received an impression there, with the levity of innocence, of which she could not then foresee the effects. The commencement and end of this acquaintance having not, however, exceeded three days, Mr. Johnstone thought himself authorized to

present to her the impropriety of her situation—the necessity there was, were it on account of appearances only, for her changing it, and satisfied, by making her an offer of his hand and fortune.

Amisa was not prepared for such a declaration. She requested time to consider of a proposal, so momentous to her future peace; and when he took leave of her in the evening, he mentioned his intention of going to Bath for a few days, and on his return, should expect her final answer.

As soon as he had left her, she ruminated on all that he had said—his disinterested generosity—the certainty of a protector for life—and the perfidy of Dillon—all operated to influence her mind in his favour. She wished to have retained him as her friend—a closer tie was repugnant to her inclinations; but a serious reflection on her situation, peculiar and friendless as it was, determined her conduct; and she resolved never more, to cast a thought on him, who had proved himself unworthy of her; but to combat with her feelings, and accept the proffered hand of Mr. Johnstone.

Previous to his return, her decision was made; and after a short time, they were united in the cathedral of Bristol. As she approached the altar, she cast a tearful eye on the monument of Mrs. Mason. The unfinished epitaph was yet in her pocket. She had not

since returned there. The susceptible heart will account for it.

For a few weeks only, Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone continued at Shirehampton. He then proposed her accompanying him to Wales—and in a bleak and dreary part of Pembroke-shire, where the incessant torrents sweep the lofty mountains, was the naturally lively, and good-humoured Louisa, condemned to pine away her days in solitary sorrow, for the choice she had made.

Mr. Johnstone now unveiled his real character, which was morose, avaricious, and over-bearing. He saw no company, but a few masters of trading vessels; and the contrast between her former society, and present mode of life, was too wide, not to create in her bosom a wish for a medium. But, alas! vain were her wishes. To the ear of her tyrant he dared not divulge them—and if she had, they would not have availed her! Frequently, and ungenerously, he upbraided her with partiality for Dillon; and not being aware, that to himself alone, must be attributed her state of dejection, ascribed it to what he indignantly termed, ‘that unworthy passion!’

Near two years passed in this state of miserable existence, and he had not yet performed his promise of writing to the admiral, to solicit on her part, his forgiveness. His motive for not doing so was unknown to Louisa—but she had a powerful one.

His father had passed the best part of his

purser of a man of war, and had realized a considerable property. To Admiral Sydney's notice, he had many years since, introduced his son, who was afterwards favored by him, with a recommendation to the same employment. In the first ship in which he sailed, he became so extremely obnoxious, by his insolence and brutality, that it was feared a general mutiny would take place, and the captain, to pacify those under his command, found himself obliged to promise, that he would take the first opportunity of sending Johnstone on shore—which was done accordingly.

Irritated by a conduct, that he had, nevertheless, so well deserved, he returned to England, and, his father dying soon after, he succeeded to some thousands, and meeting, accidentally, one day, Admiral Sydney, he related a variety of untruths, respecting his former captain, which were answered by the admiral's requesting Mr. Johnstone to dispense with any more recommendations from, or acquaintance with himself, the captain of whom he spoke being a gentleman, not only of high birth, but of the most amiable character, and being, likewise, one of the bravest and most distinguished officers in his majesty's navy. Thus silenced, Mr. Johnstone had nothing left but to make his bow, which was coldly returned by the admiral, who, from that hour, never condescended to notice, though he frequently met with him.

It was not very probable, after this, that

admiral would receive and acknowledge Mr. Johnstone as a son-in-law. No ; he was against of that gentleman's opinion, and, so far from making an application of that kind, wished him to remain ignorant of the marriage, under the persuasion, that, if he became acquainted with it he should not inherit his property ; but, that it would be limited to the sole disposal of his wife. To see her made independent of himself, would be more mortifying than his present situation. He was determined to regulate her own particular expences by her poverty ; and though, to gratify his own propensities, he kept a good table, and lived otherwise well, yet he stinted her in every thing in which he was not personally concerned, and gave her more the appearance of an upper-servant, than of a gentlewoman, from which she had never derogated, save in that one instance, of uniting herself to him.

Mrs. Johnstone was now far advanced in her pregnancy, and her husband informed her that he was obliged to go, for a month, to London. She fervently solicited his permission to accompany him, but he was deaf to her intreaties. He departed the next morning, leaving her the *large* sum of ten pounds, and regardless of her perilous situation, without a friend to comfort her, or even a nurse provided for her.

Driven by the baseness and cruelty of this man, almost to desperation, she remained there patiently, for one week after his departure.

and then formed the resolution of clandestinely quitting his house. In the days of his early generosity, Mr. Johnstone had presented his wife with a considerable sum of money, to enable her to purchase cloaths, and other articles, of which she stood in want. Of this she had employed but a small part, and had hoarded the remainder for a future emergency, which now appeared to her an act of Providence in her favour. She flew to the cabinet in which her money was deposited; and on counting it, found that she was mistress of near two hundred pounds.

She resolved to travel in the most economical manner, and to conceal her real name, endeavouring, by every means in her power, to elude the pursuit of her tyrant, and to repair to London, to obtain information, if possible, of her father and her aunt. She arrived at Marlborough, but found herself unable to proceed any farther; and, after waiting two or three days at the inn, in hopes of amendment, she considered, that, in her then situation, it was probable, that an interview with her father would be attended with consequences the most fatal to herself; and that she would have a double claim on his pity and his affection, when she presented to him, with herself, her child.

Worn out by anxiety of mind, she resolved on secluding herself from the eye of observation; and having paid what she owed at the inn, wandered till she reached the forest.

where, exhausted by fatigue, she sat down, and descried at a small distance, several cottages thinly scattered about.

Her fancy pictured to her, that in one of these, she might find a secure asylum, till her day of trial was over. With difficulty she reached the place; and the first object that she beheld, was of a nature, to render her forgetful of her own miseries, in her participation of those of another. A woman, neatly attired, was trembling at the uplifted arm of her husband, who was execrating her in terms the most opprobrious, for having caught her in the act of giving victuals to a gipsy-woman, for telling her fortune, forsooth; but she should pack off with her bag and baggage, he said, if ever one of such darkened *his* door again.

Louisa, though by nature extremely gentle, was yet bold and courageous, when she saw tyranny exercised against any living thing, save herself. With a look, that made vice tremble, she commanded him to desist; at the same time adding, that if he continued his brutality, she would instantly return to Marlborough, take an oath before a magistrate of what she had witnessed, and had no doubt that his conduct would receive the chastisement it merited; for, that an injured woman's wrongs were considered by the legislature, as important enough to be revenged by it.

Cowardice is a constant attendant upon tyranny! It shrinks at the shadow of courage.

and knowing, though anxious to conceal its own deformity, starts at the dread of detection. This was exactly the case in the present instance. Luke Thompson was in the habit of watching the motions of his neighbours before he began to quarrel with his wife; and never presumed to disturb her peace, until he was well assured that they were either at their respective employments, or comfortably asleep in their beds; and if, perchance, honest Martha, his wife, made a confidential friend of one of them, he began, in pitiful accents, to lament her unruly temper, and to assert his own innocence. But, when it so happened, that any of the *men* of her own family, visited her from Marlborough, Martha was praised by her husband, as a pattern of wives, for every humane and endearing qualification.

Peace being restored, Louisa faint with the exertions of the day, enquired of Martha, whether she could inform her of any decent place in the neighbourhood, where she could remain till she was delivered, her husband being, she said, abroad; and illness having overtaken her, while on her journey to her family and friends. Her languid countenance and heavy eye, corroborated the truth of her assertion; and to these she added a more powerful incentive to the breast of Luke Thompson. She produced a purse containing a few guineas; and this she did, lest they should suspect her to be an adventurer, who, from sinister motives, wished to secrete herself and, perhaps,

to defraud the poor. To obviate such suspicions, she likewise thought it necessary to add, that she had a sufficiency in the hands of a banker, at Bristol, to defray, with liberality, the expences of her lying-in ; but that for family reasons, privacy was her choice, which perhaps at a future day, she might explain to them.

Two considerations, and they were very different ones, influenced Luke Thompson and his wife. The former thought on the purse, on the good qualities of the lady's cloths, and on the profit which, it was probable, he should derive from her becoming an inmate in his house. Martha was biassed by another motive. The dignity with which the lady addressed her husband, and, by it, intimidated him, convinced her, that she would hereafter prove a protection from that violence, of which she had so frequently suffered the effects, and that she would derive consequence from such a lodger, the idea of which consequence was dear to the heart of Martha.

Louisa had thrown herself, uninvited into a chair, and received the glass of water of which she stood in need, when she arose to withdraw, pleading her fatigue as an excuse for her anxiety to retire for the night, into any house that would receive her until the morning, when it was her intention, she said, to return to Marlborough, and to proceed, if possible, on her journey to London.

She was conducted by Martha, at the desire

of her husband, into an upper room, which was neatly, though very plainly furnished. A bed, which had nothing but cleanliness to recommend it, had been occupied, they told her, by a young female out of place, a relation of Martha's, who was gone to Bath. Louisa hesitated not in accepting their offer for the night—and an adjacent public-house furnished her with those humble necessities which are so grateful to exhausted nature. A sound and invigorating sleep relieved the mental, as well as bodily fatigues of Louisa; and in the morning, a pleasant smile of approbation from her landlord, greeted her early presence. Had he not made the first advances, 'tis probable that Louisa would have passed his threshold, and again encountered the tempests of life, while seeking only to repose beneath its calms. But he civilly and courteously enquired, whether she could put up with the homely fare to which himself and his wife were accustomed; assuring her, that he would procure from Marlborough every thing she might require; that there were several good *doctors* there, and that they had an old woman in one of the neighbouring cottages, who was *famous* in such cases; and would no doubt, do her best for the lady, whenever she was called upon.

Louisa had already formed an attachment for the forest. Its romantic scenery, which boasted no charms for its inhabitants, possessed wondrous beauties in *her* eyes; and, in every lofty oak, she thought she beheld a sacred guar-

dian!—The cottage in which she now was stood at the entrance of that beautiful avenue distinguished by the name of Savernake, which leads to the superb mansion of Lord Aylebury. —She already anticipated the pleasure she should enjoy from perambulating that spacious domain; and, though she could not at once reconcile her mind to its confinement, with Luke Thompson and his wife, she reflected, that any situation from which she could derive peace and quietness, would be preferable to exposing her life, and the life of her unborn child, to the dangers of precarious and premature confinement. She therefore, at once, accepted the offer; and put a trifling sum into the hands of Martha, who, overjoyed by her commission, speedily executed it, and returned from Marlborough before the dinner hour, loaded with such requisites as the present moment demanded.

CHAPTER XXII.

Continuation of Louisa's History. The Cottager.

IN this state of mental derangement, (for what other name can we give to a situation so calamitous?) did the lovely Louisa pass near two lingering months.—She endeavoured to

form herself to the rude society which herself had created ! She was grateful for the attentions she received from it ; she would have repaid them by acknowledgments infinitely greater than her purse could then command ; but she felt, that her guardian angel slept ; and that she was become a discarded and solitary being ; looked upon with an eye of suspicion, even by those whom she supported ; and, worst of all, whenever she descended into her inmost self, she met with nothing there but reproaches the most bitter ; and discovered, at a distance, a perspective the most barren of resource !— Sometimes, she wrung her hands in speechless agony ; then wiped away her tears, and joined Martha in her business of the day. At other times, she would wander among the woods, desolate and forlorn ; and often would her wavering mind repose on scenes long past, while her quick foot-steps proclaimed variety of intellect ; and she lamented that fatal period of her happiness, which appeared to her to have terminated all earthly prosperity.

Such were the wanderings, such the existence of Louisa Johnstone, until nature made her most powerful effort, and presented to her a lovely boy !—To do justice to the conduct of Luke Thompson, he had really, from Louisa's first appearance in his house, paid her every attention ; which, whether actuated by self-interest or humanity, had the same effect, and operated on her mind with that electric force, of which a tender and comprehensive one alone is susceptible.

For several hours, life struggled hard against death. Youth and constitution at length overcame the latter; the old woman was seconded in her endeavours by a very eminent surgeon, of Marlborough, ere the momentous crisis arrived, which would prolong or terminate the life of Louisa Johnstone. Had the common perils of child-birth only intervened, the lovely mother might have spared the narrator the anguish of her subsequent history—but to these were added the labours of a mind fraught with inward struggles, the most various in cause, the most direful in effect!—The reader knows enough of her history to account for her present calamity. Were he ignorant of it, pages might be filled, without sufficiently explaining the miseries attendant on a mind diseased, which bears every symptom of decay, yet possesses not the shadow of a cure, or even that of temporary alleviation!—Louisa yielded herself to affliction; she surveyed Martha as a benign angel, who pitied her griefs, but who had it not in her power to mitigate them; and, searching in her own soul the generous qualities which preponderated there, conveyed them in idea to Martha's, and hailed them as her chosen friends.

A certain degree of superstition had received from childhood a welcome in the mind of Louisa; she had even courted it since the commencement of her sorrows, and had considered as ominous, every trivial event to which the changes of her late mode of existence had

given birth. In Martha, she thought that she beheld the chosen guardian of her son; and to her care she intrusted him. While under the dread of approaching dissolution, she anticipated his infantine wrongs,—the contumely of his birth—and the revengeful spirit of his father, which would probably rise towards him from the ashes of her memory. When, opposed to that bitter reflection, she saw in her child the grandson of Admiral Sydney—a ray of light broke through the dark cloud of her present situation; and a faint, yet cheering hope, represented Martha, carrying her smiling burthen to the feet of her father!—Her heart beat high with exultation at the rapturous idea, and she resolved on reposing in Martha the most unlimited confidence. Selecting, therefore, a time of day, when Luke was not expected for some hours, she thus addressed her:—

‘I think, Martha, that I can depend upon your friendship for me, and on your care for the preservation of my child; a secret of great magnitude lies heavy at my heart, and to *you* I will confide it!—Say, Martha—will you promise to keep it sacred?’

Martha seriously replied in the affirmative.

‘I am not,’ continued Louisa, ‘the friendless person I may have appeared to you. I have rich and powerful friends; and *they* shall reward you, as you deal by *me*!’

This solemn preparation, inspired Martha with reverential awe for the speaker, whose cheeks were suffused with a hectic blush.

gave life and animation to her features. Clinging to her bosom her sleeping babe, she blessed it in the tears of true affection; and gave it into the arms of Martha, 'Alfred,' she said, 'is the name that you must witness his redemption; and do you answer for him to his God, as you will for yourself, when that God calls upon you, to remember the injunctions of a dying mother—'

'A dying mother!' cried Martha, with fearful amazement—

'Yes, Martha,' resumed Louisa, 'I repeat the word dying, because—but tell me, Martha, do you believe in dreams?'

'Indeed, and indeed, I do!' replied Martha—'I remember—it is now, I suppose, a dozen years ago—'

'It is no matter,' interrupted Louisa, 'and perhaps it is a weakness; but I am glad you think as I do, that what I have to say may not appear ridiculous, but have its proper effect on you. For my own part, I never had a dream which made any particular impression on my mind, that was not followed by what I conceived it to import. But why do I talk of dreams? What I have to tell you, Martha, was rather a vision—'

'A vision! what! in *our* house, madam?' asked Martha—

'Even here,' replied Louisa; 'and but a few nights before this dear infant saw the light—'

'Aye,' said Martha, 'dreams at those times are very true, and I suppose visions ten times more so.'

‘Well then,’ resumed Louisa, ‘listen, and I will tell you what I saw :—’

‘It was one evening, after I had rambled in the forest, several hours, and was wearied, that I sat under a large oak to repose myself, my head leaning against a projecting part of its mossy trunk. The setting sun glimmered through the branches of the trees before me. I fell into a kind of doze, something between sleeping and waking. I thought, I perceived the sun set, the moon rise, and millions of stars twinkle through the hemisphere. I gazed intently on the moon, which was always with me a favorite object, and imagined I never saw her look so mild and beautiful, when, to my amazement, she seemed suddenly transformed into the bright image of a woman, resembling myself, and surrounded, as it were, with a circlet of stars. Oh ! it was a delightful vision ! But presently I observed, first one star disappear, then another, and another, till they were all vanished ; and the image robbed of the brilliancy of those stars, remained like a pale and pensive woman, still resembling myself. By-and-by there came a black cloud, which wrapt the figured moon in darkness, but, soon passed away, and nothing remained but one poor little star, that seemed to twinkle upon me, and at last appeared gliding down from the heavens, towards me. From this reverie, I was disturbed by the bleating of a little lamb, that had lost its mother.—Now, Martha, I need not tell you, what I think all

this means. I have prepared my mind. It may be a warning, God's will be done!—If it is only a fantasy, it has had the salutary effect of shewing me the necessity of revealing myself to you, that let what will happen, this dear, this helpless babe, may not be left in the wide world, without a witness to declare who and what he is. But I have tired you, Martha—to-morrow you shall know more.'

Louisa, having thus prepared the mind of Martha, related to her, on the morrow, every incident of her eventful life. She received from her a solemn promise, never to divulge but to her father, in the event of her finding him, who she was. Martha gave her every consolatory assurance, and made a serious vow to Louisa, that she would leave no means untried, to find out the admiral. Mr. Munro the surgeon, coming in almost immediately after, the conversation ceased; and it was agreed among them, that Alfred should, on the following morning, be taken by Martha to the village church, and there receive the rites of baptism—that gentleman and Martha, making themselves answerable as his sponsors. Louisa was exhausted by fatigue, and soon after fell into a profound sleep; from which, after several hours, she awoke, with a high fever, and other alarming symptoms.

Mr. Munro was kind and constant in his attendance on her; he was anxious to know the name and quality of the fair stranger, but he was by nature, too modest and unassuming

ever to wish his curiosity gratified at the expense of another's peace. He had once slightly questioned Martha, respecting her knowledge of the lady; but she was at that time totally ignorant of those circumstances, with which she was now so fully acquainted; and after becoming so, he never more addressed her on the subject.

The next day, the young Alfred was received a member of the church of England. It was one of those days, wherein nature appears to be at variance with herself; when the heavens, united against man, issue their awful fiat, and menace overwhelming destruction. Scarcely had they entered the church, drenched with the pouring rain, when a crash of thunder seemed to shake its foundation, and the forked lightning darted upon the page of revelation. The affrighted Martha trembled, as she thought on the vision of the forest. Mr. Munro, who was not wholly free from the prevalent superstitions of the North of Scotland, augured some dreadful mystery relative to the birth of the young christian. They were obliged to wait near an hour in the church; the curate, whose house was hard by, not possessing that humanity, which should be the grand characteristic of his sacred function, disdained to take any further notice of them than to receive his fees; and the clerk, following the laudable example of his patron, stood with the key in his hand, as if anxious to close the door against them.

Mr. Munro having a patient to attend at Marlborough, could not accompany Martha to the cottage, but promised that the weather should not prevent his being there early in the afternoon. Martha approached the bed with her charge; but what was her amazement on finding it empty! She had intreated Luke to remain in the house till her return; but that unfeeling monster, callous to every sentiment of compassion, had already cast an eye of jealousy on those conferences between his wife and Louisa, from which he was excluded; and the groans of the dying would have sounded musical in his ears, had they contributed only for one moment, to the gratification of his wishes.

Martha's amazement, on finding the house thus unexpectedly deserted, can be easier conceived, than described. The most torturing apprehensions racked her soul. She took Alfred to a neighbour's cottage, and then set forward with all diligence, in quest of the unhappy fugitive. She had crossed the forest in various directions, scarcely knowing whither she went, when she suddenly recollected a pool of water, at a short distance, and thither her steps instinctively conducted her. On approaching the place, she discovered something white, laying near it, and her fears seemed to be verified. Breathless with terror, she kept hastening towards the immoveable object when, with joy and horror united, she beheld Louisa motionless, senseless, and extended on

the ground. Martha, uttered a piercing, shriek, which was fortunately heard and noticed by a young peasant, who knew her; and they, together, bore the ill-fated Louisa to the house. The rain had penetrated her thin garments, which smoked with the fever's fire; and she was put to bed in the same state of insensibility in which she was found.

The attentive Martha ran to the cottage where she had left Alfred, and prevailing on the woman to take care of the lady till her return, went with all the haste she could make, to Marlborough, and found Mr. Munro mounting his horse to attend them. From her report, he deemed it requisite to provide himself with proper remedies, and entered the cottage just as Louisa had opened her languid eyes; and, though still speechless, signified by a look, that she knew her friends were about her.

She became gradually sensible, and even composed; the fever seemed to have exhausted itself for a while, though Mr. Munro gave no hopes of its being subdued; he rather, he said, apprehended, that it would return with increasing violence, before the next morning, and gave directions to Martha, what to observe during his absence.

Towards evening, she reached her feeble hand to Martha, who, gently pressing it, bedewed it with the unaffected tear of genuine compassion. 'Poor lady!' said she, 'I am not greatly born, like you—yet I feel that I wish I

was your mother—for then, perhaps you had been happier!’

‘Restrain your tears, good Martha,’ answered Louisa, ‘and wish not for the prolongation of a wretched existence. My sorrows will soon be over, and you have promised to protect that innocent. Lose no time, when I am gone, in endeavouring to find my father.—Your cruel husband will consent to *that*, because he will benefit by the discovery as well as yourself. But, oh, Martha, remember my injunction!—Never suffer, that through *your* means, an unnatural husband and father, shall behold his offspring. Let the guardianship of his youth be the admiral’s care—for the sake of a daughter that he once loved, he will grant you this request; and oh, if it be possible, Martha, remain with him—and when he is old enough to comprehend you, tell him, that like myself, he lost, in helpless infancy, a mother, whose arm should have supported him, whose heart should have cherished him, and who wished only to preserve life, as long as that life was necessary to *him*!’

She faintly articulated the last words; her head sunk on her pillow, and Martha was of opinion that the last awful scene was over—after a short pause, however, she feebly raised her head, and thus continued:

‘Should I not survive until morning, you will deliver my watch to Mr. Munro, as a small acknowledgment of my gratitude, for his humane and friendly services; you will likewise

present him with ten guineas. More than that sum, you will find in my purse. In my pocket-book, which I beg you will immediately take into your possession, and conceal from your husband, is a much larger sum; with that you will be enabled to take care of my child, until you find my father, or some of *his* friends; and the remainder will, I hope, be sufficient to support you, until you are properly rewarded by them. The little stock of cloaths that I have with me, I request your acceptance of; with the exception of a few cambric handkerchiefs, marked with the initials, L. S. which belonged to me in happier days, as the last letter will testify. A miniature, too, of my father, which is suspended round my neck, will put your veracity out of doubt; take it, then, even now; and tell *him* whose semblance it bears; that this tender, this parting kiss'—while her trembling hands strained it to her cold lips, 'conveys but a faint idea of the love that my heart has ever borne him.'

Martha took the picture and pocket-book, as desired, resolving in her own mind, that her husband should never see them. Louisa lived till the return of Mr. Munro, into whose hands she gave her watch, and the money she intended for him. She retained her senses for about an hour afterwards; then called for her child, whom she affectionately embraced—bestowed a sweet smile on the weeping Martha; and, holding one of the hands of Mr. Munro, which at the last moment she violently pressed, expired without a groan!

Thus perished in the twenty-fifth year of her age, the equally lovely and unfortunate Louisa Johnstone; and from her sad history, this moral at least may be drawn; that, to the force of bad example, are to be attributed most of the calamities attendant on human nature. Louisa, with a mind as susceptible as her form was graceful—with every charm of virtue and innocence, had yet imbibed from her aunt a love of dissipation, and those fashionable frailties which the moralist denominates vices, and from having witnessed so much duplicity, at length authorized herself, by example, to practice it. She forsook her aunt in her distress, to avoid sharing it; and not from any *real* dislike to her way of life; or from any compunction that she felt, at the unwarrantable extravagance, which had so often proved heart-rending, as well as inconvenient to the admiral. Her union with Mr. Johnstone, and his subsequent conduct, appeared to be a retributive punishment; and often, and heavily, did the sense of her ingratitude weigh upon her mind, and added self-reproach to the long catalogue of her misfortunes. Mr. Munro was of opinion, that, had it not been for the cruel absence of Luke, at such a critical period, she might have been saved; and, that her immediate death was owing to the violent cold she caught on the wet ground, during her delirium. Martha, on hearing this, accused her husband as the murderer of Louisa, and peace, which had never reigned for three days

uninterrupted in the cottage, became, from this time, for ever excluded from it.

The grateful Martha put six guineas into the hands of Mr. Munro, which remained in the purse, and intreated him to spare no expence in arranging the funeral, that all possible respect might be paid to the remains of a lady who had so well deserved it at her hands.— Luke was present at this conversation, and the words ‘*no expence*,’ resounded in his ears—he enquired whether all the money that was left, was to be employed in gew-gaws for the dead, instead of the living being justly paid their own?—and if he was to keep that woman, and let her die in his house, and be not a farthing the better for it?—This asperity was, however, answered with becoming dignity by Mr. Munro, who, putting the six guineas into the hands of Luke, informed him, that her liberality towards himself, made it needless to resort to *them* for defraying her *last* expences, as it was his intention to take the whole charge of that upon himself. Mr. Munro forgot not likewise to remind him, that from the first hour of the lady’s entering his house, she had amply supplied it in every respect.

Expostulation, or argument, were alike thrown away upon Luke Thompson ; but the six guineas put him into good humor ; he consented that the corpse should remain in the house, until the proper time for interment, and snatching up his hat, went to regale himself with his friends leaving Martha to regulate

the business with Mr. Munro, in whatever way that gentleman might think proper.

Luke, who was in the habit, when he had got any money, of staying out for several days together, did not return home till the end of a week, being the evening of the day on which the funeral had taken place. It was followed by Mr. Munro and Martha—the neighbour before-mentioned, bearing little Alfred to the grave of his mother. It was on the thirteenth day of his life, that he unconsciously witnessed a ceremony so fatal to himself. Martha was become his second mother, and how well she deserved the trust, will be seen hereafter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Woodland Scenes.

THE reader has already formed his opinion of Luke Thompson. He has seen that he was a morose fellow, influenced only by his own interest, and restrained only by a consideration of his own personal safety, from committing the most atrocious acts, and in the excess of his irascible passions, from laying violent hands on his wife. Among those to whom they were mutually known, he was detested, in proportion as she was regarded; but those, indeed,

were few ; for he associated only with the lowest of the lowest, among whom it was his ambition to be chief. He was profligate in the extreme, and indulged himself in every species of vice ; drunkenness and brutality seemed to be his principal delight, and he was not apt to consider the complexion of any action that could contribute to his gratification. His moral consideration never stopped short of the gallows, and it was for the gallows, only, that he entertained that reverential regard, which others usually pay to the laws of their country. In this respect, it must be confessed, that he had the example of many of his betters, equally flagitious and equally skilful. Of most of those actions, which in his inferior state, could be committed, without risking his departure out of this world by means of the halter, he had been guilty.

Luke had been an inhabitant of the metropolis, and soon became initiated in the mysteries of the various situations which he had, at different times filled, such as ostler, chairman, porter, and others equally edifying. But from untimely exertions of his skill in those mysteries, he never long remained on one spot, and at length found it expedient to quit London altogether. With a change of place, he determined to change his conduct, as far as his strong propensities would permit him, and in his present state, he passed for a tolerably honest fellow, with one of the best of wives, and one of the worst of tempers. When he was

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not immediately engaged in his vocation, labouring in the gardens of the neighbouring gentry, or in hedging and ditching in the vicinity of the forest, he spent most of his time at a small public-house in Marlborough, remarkable for being resorted to by company of his own class, and where he had always the credit of being chalked behind the bar-door to a considerable amount. Like many of his superiors, he had a turn for gambling, and of his debts of honor, there stood frequent memorandums over the mantle-piece of the landlord's tap-room. Whenever he was asked for money which he could not pay—whenever he had been a loser at play, or unlucky in his bets—or whenever he had been offended by another, whom he had not the courage to correct—poor Martha, his wife, was sure to feel the effects of his ill humours, by continual abuse, or brutish sulkeness.

He had conducted himself with uncommon decency ever since Louisa's lying-inn, and it is possible that her death might have had a considerable influence upon him. A short time after that awful event, however, he began mildly to expostulate with his wife, and to enquire what was to be done with the child? for he said, he had no notion of their keeping the children of other people, who could so ill maintain themselves. Martha, gratified by the change she observed in his manner, and willing to prevent future altercation, told him, that the lady had left in her care, sufficient to

keep the child as it ought to be kept, and that would enable them to live decently without much labour on his part. With this he was perfectly satisfied, and continued for upwards of a year, to behave with decency to his wife, and some degree of attention to the child. It was long since Martha had experienced so much contentment. She became every day more attached to Alfred, and faithfully fulfilled her duty. Such, however, was the state of the child's health, that Martha was quite confined by her attention to him, and was obliged to fix upon a distant period, for enquiring after the admiral; about which she was not so solicitous, as the restoration of Alfred's health, and having the means of his immediate support in her hand. Having turned the year, the child's health began to undergo a change for the better, and Martha now projected setting out in search of Admiral Sydney.

A few weeks previous to this, Luke Thompson had begun to revert to his former vicious habits, and to pass most of his time at the pot-house, where he had indulged himself to such excess in gambling and drunkenness, that, independent of spending the money assigned for his recreation, his debt there had arisen to a larger sum than usual; for his credit had been extended, in consequence of its being known, that a gentlewoman had lodged and died in his house, and he was one night so much out of the good graces of the goddess who presides over *All-Fours*, and the more rapid game of

Put, that he resolved on the most desperate means of satisfying his demands, and retrieving his credit.

It was but the day before, that a violent altercation had taken place between him and Martha, respecting the money which Mrs. Johnstone had left, and a part of which he had insisted upon devoting to his own purposes.— This, Martha had properly and strenuously resisted, and even went so far as to threaten putting all that Mrs. Johnstone had left into the hands of their landlord, and relating to him all the circumstances regarding it and the child, for whose provision it was intended. He well knew the affection Martha had conceived for Mrs. Johnstone and for the child, and that she was likely to carry her threat into execution, having acquired, by the protection of Mrs. Johnstone, stronger resolutions to oppose his tyranny, especially when it should extend beyond herself, and become more particularly atrocious.

On his return home from Marlborough, he ruminated on these things. He had been too deeply engaged in gambling to be much intoxicated, and arrived at his cottage about one o'clock in the morning. Having let himself in with a key, which he always carried, he struck a light and proceeded to the bed-room, where lay the infant Alfred, in the arms of Martha, both of them fast asleep.

His thoughts were of dreadful import, as he stood pondering over the slumbering innocent.

Martha's late resistance, and her determination to be faithful to the poor little Alfred, had excited in his heart a degree of hatred against her, which all their former animosities had not been able to create—so great is the antipathy of growing vice to active virtue!

Whilst he stood, irresolute what to do, and his mind was worked upon by the most direful passions, his countenance underwent variety of change—at length, putting the candle on a chair, he drew from his pocket a long clasped knife, which he suddenly opened with a sort of rapid ferocity, and again taking up the candle, approached the bed. Whilst the light trembled in one hand, with the other he seemed to grasp the knife firmly.

Looking in the face of Martha, he paused. The scowl of revenge sat on his brow. In that important moment the infant awoke, and stretched forth its little hands towards the light. Fearing lest it should cry, and awaken his wife, he extended his arm to strike the deadly blow. The child, in reaching towards the light, fell on the bosom of its foster-mother, who, at that instant, awaking from a dreadful dream, looked aghast on her husband, and cried, 'Good God protect me! was it not a dream? Is it you, Luke? What's the matter?'

She raised herself in the bed, and seeing the knife in his hand, screamed aloud, and clasped the child to her breast—'God protect me and the child!' she exclaimed. 'Luke Thompson! why do you look so terrible? What are you

going to do with that knife? God Almighty protect us!

‘Neither God nor devil,’ returned he, sitting down the candle, ‘neither God nor devil shall protect you, unless you tell me where you have hidden the money.’

‘Hear me, Luke,’ she replied, ‘dear Luke, hear me!’

‘I will hear nothing,’ said he, seating himself on the bed, and grasping one of her arms; ‘Tell me where the money is, or’—and in his other hand he again grasped the knife.

The child, as if conscious of what was passing, shrieked, and clung close to Martha, hiding its face in her bosom. Letting go her arm, he pushed the infant on one side, and elevated his hand with the weapon:—
‘Luke Thompson,’ said Martha, calmly, ‘all this would not frighten me, and I should care nothing about dying, only for that dear little infant.’

‘Curse the bastard!’ exclaimed Thompson, ‘I will dash out its brains against the wall!’ and arose to put his menace into execution.—
Martha, in an agony, cried out—

‘Hold, Luke! hold! I will give you all the money.’

‘Quick, then!’ said he—‘tell me where it is?’

‘It is at the bottom of the old oak chest, under my best gown,’ answered Martha.

‘That’s enough!’ said Thompson, ‘do you lie still!’

He went into the next room, where the chest stood, and taking the money, extinguished the light, and rushed precipitately out of the house.

But what words can paint the honest indignation which filled the breast of Martha, on a conduct so atrocious? Fain would she have persuaded herself to believe, that her husband's mind was labouring under the influence of temporary insanity—but his repeated acts of brutality towards herself, had long since convinced her, that his heart, not his head, was the most fatal enemy to himself, as well as to her—and the affection she once bore him being now wholly extinguished, she resolved on trusting her own fate, and the fate of her charge, to providence alone; first satisfying herself as to the extent of his ungenerous and cruel depredation.

She arose from her bed; the grey dawn was dimly peeping through the wood; but her curiosity, impelled both by astonishment and fear, determined her on exploring the chest—she therefore struck a light, and wiping away the tears which her efforts could not controul, proceeded to minute investigation.

Not a vestige of her property remained in the chest; she had foolishly flattered herself that *some* part of it he would have left, were it only to avoid the scandal of the robbery, which when known, would subject him to the severest punishment. All, all was gone!—and with clasped hands and streaming eyes, she besought the Almighty to pity and protect the orphan,

and to shield her from the storm, in the midst of which she now stood defenceless !

She retired to bed, and, bathing with her tears the sleeping Alfred, found, that from innocence could be extracted consolation. She had been to him a faithful servant, and a guardian. It was to save *him* from ignominy, that she had confessed to her husband she had the means of supporting him. Thus, are the best and purest motives often productive of the worst consequences, and the most upright heart counteracted in its endeavours, by the machinations of the vilest !

Martha arose early, with a determination of going to Marlborough, in search of her husband. Leaving, therefore, the unconscious Alfred, in a sweet sleep, she went, to a cottage about a quarter of a mile's distance, to request the woman belonging to it would take care of him till her return. Dame Goodman, her neighbour, promised to be there within the hour, and Martha returned home to wait her coming.

The first object that struck her eyes, was the door of her cottage broken open. For a moment, terror overcame her, and she stood aghast, expecting to find Alfred murdered by her husband. She quickly, however, gained courage to ascend the narrow stair-case ; and hearing no noise, become more composed. She approached the bed. Alfred was no longer there ! The wretched Martha sunk upon the ground ; nor arose from it until summoned.

by neighbour Goodman, who, being informed of the double catastrophe, recommended it to her not to lose time in vain repinings, but to use every immediate exertion for the discovery of the child. Mrs. Goodman recollected, that she had seen several gypsies lurking about the day before, in the woods; and it occurred to her, that he had been stolen by some of them. She acquainted Martha with her suspicions, who comforted by the idea that he was not murdered, determined to go in pursuit of the gypsies, and relinquished every idea of seeking her worthless husband, to whom alone she could attribute all her present miseries.

Leaving, therefore, her old neighbour to take care of her house, she plunged into the thickest parts of the forest, which resounded with her cries. Scarcely knowing what she did, she continued her persevering and useless search, until the shades of evening fell on the brown foliage of the woods, and rendered their natural gloom still more melancholy.—Exhausted by fatigue and hunger, the wretched Martha resolved to give up her unavailing search until the morning, and return to her forsaken home.

She was now more than five miles distant from it, and was considering on the nearest road she could take, when she was accosted by a traveller on horseback, who humanely enquired into the cause of her grief. She briefly related to him the loss of Alfred, and he in-

formed her, that about half an hour before, she had passed several gypsies, who had turned to the right of the wood, and thither she determined to proceed.

After thanking, and taking leave of the stranger, she pursued with wearied step, her solitary way; and soon after perceived at some distance, a smoke in the woods. She advanced towards it with precipitation, and observed a gleam of a large fire. But the distance was far more considerable than she had at first apprehended.

It was dark ere she was near enough to distinguish, that round the fire were sitting many persons of different sexes and ages. The formidable assembly intimidated Martha, whose heart grew faint while she surveyed them, and whose body was too much debilitated by fatigue, to make escape possible; had she attempted it. She walked several times round the circle, to see if she could discover any children among them, and perceived several, whose stained faces proclaimed the nature of their occupation. The crackling faggots diffused light and heat around, and a sudden blaze discovered to the inquiring and distracted eye of Martha, the infant Alfred, sleeping in the arms of a very ancient female.

Martha, whose gladness superseded fear, gave a scream of joy, and running up to them, repeatedly cried out, 'my child!—my child!—give me my child!'—The amazement and confusion of those whom she addressed, sur-

passed even her own—she fell on her knees before them, and strove by every argument to convince them of her claim, and to excite their compassion; but they were immoveable, and positively refused to surrender him—they spoke in low voices to one another, and made signs which were to her incomprehensible—at last they unanimously agreed, that in order to prevent her from informing against them to the neighbouring magistrates, it was indispensibly necessary she should become one of *them*.

Martha stood dejected and irresolute before them. To leave Alfred was impossible—to take him from these people, into whose hands he had so unhappily fallen, she now found to be equally so. The idea of becoming one of their fraternity, was not to be supported by the generous-minded Martha, who at length, summoning courage, resolutely declared against it. Scarcely had she spoken, ere she discovered among the crowd, the same woman who had so exasperated Luke, by telling her fortune, and to which was owing the introduction of Mrs. Johnstone into her cottage. In her, whom she had so liberally rewarded, she now hoped to find a friend, nor was she thoroughly mistaken—the woman recognized, and came up to her—advised her to submit to their wishes, otherwise her life would be in danger.

Martha still persisted in her refusal, and wept bitterly. An old woman, who appeared to be at the head of them, arose from the ground on which she was sitting, and com-

manded silence, while she spoke in a tone of authority, and what she said was received with submissive obedience. The speaker addressed Martha, and left it to her choice, either to accept her offer of becoming one of them, or to see Alfred perish in the flames. Martha hesitated, and at once became a seeming convert to their life and principles. She was forced to take a sort of oath of allegiance to her new commanders, who in return for her acquiescence, delivered up Alfred to her care.

A place was made for her in the ring, near her old acquaintance, and at the fire, with a goose and several fowls roasting, on the success of which they congratulated the principal plunderer of the day. Bladders, filled with spirits, were produced, and mirth and jollity prevailed, save in the sad breast of Martha, who in finding her child, had lost her own, and her liberty, perhaps, for ever!—The conversation was solely relative to the occurrences of the day.

The gypsey character was at once developed to Martha, who, though she could not but be in abhorrence their practices, was yet pleased to observe the fidelity and good-will that reigned among them, and a particular respect for her, who seemed to be their leader, which had the good effect, at least, of preventing any of that improper language, one should naturally expect to hear in such a community. She was warmly solicited to eat with them; but so many hours had passed since she had taken any

softenance, that she was now faint, and incapable of receiving it. They requested her to drink; but the idea of poison operated on her mind, and she peremptorily refused, although pressed by the severest calling of nature. While in the act of combating between instinct and reason, her eyes fell on those of an old man, who was attentively observing her. A look of curiosity, intermingled with gratitude for his attention, fixed the watchful gaze of Martha. She remarked that he was called Gerald, and that he was chief among the men, as the female before-mentioned, was among the women. Gerald seized an opportunity of seating himself near her—and guessing in part, from her wan countenance, the motive for her refusing any nourishment, took a horn, which had been repeatedly filled already, and replenishing it, first drank from it himself, and then solicited her with urgency to take the remainder. Martha was not insensible to the generous offer, and the mode taken to convince her of the harmlessness of the liquor. The idea raised a blush, which she hid by turning away her face. She then drank of the exhilarating beverage, and she became sensibly more reconciled to her new situation.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

Erratic Sciences.

THE night passed, as may be reasonably expected. In a large, but decaying barn, he slept contentedly, for Alfred was by her side.

The next morning she submitted with reluctance to their manners, and already was accustomed to their society. During the day Gerald watched his opportunity, and held a private conversation with Martha. He explained to her the mysteries of a gypsy life, and prevailed on her to reconcile herself to her lot, which seemed for the present to be inevitable, and which would, on further acquaintance, prove not altogether unpleasant.

There was something soothing to Martha in the manner of Gerald ; she substituted flattery for argument, and endeavoured, by every gentle representation, to win him over to her interest. He would not suffer her to finish her discourse, but ingenuously assured her that, however his inclination might lead him to adopt her opinion, and to befriend her wishes, it was vain for her to attempt to weaken the engagement into which he had entered. The laws of their community ordained implicit obedience to their chiefs, and enforced a duty on themselves, which prohibited their ever putting themselves in the power of one another. He further informed her, that the race of gypsies

consider, as their own property, whatever cattle, or habitations they may find in the different forests and woods, in which they chuse to seek a temporary residence ; and, that they also consider the neighbouring villages as bound to supply their wants, which when they cannot obtain by fair means, they conclude themselves privileged to steal ; and do it without remorse, to punish the narrow-minded beings, who would see them perish by hunger, rather than bind them by gratitude !

But the particular art on which Gerald expatiated, was now augmented to a science, and represented by him, as not only the most lucrative, but the most interesting. This was the occult science, or the art of fortune-telling ; which succeeded, he said, beyond their most sanguine expectations, and was, in reality, the only amusement which could divert their minds from the more important business of their functions. Gerald finished his kind expostulation by a promise of instructing Martha in the occult art ; and she left him still more reconciled to her wandering situation.

When Martha had leisure to return to her own mind, and to draw from it the acute sense of reflection, she ruminated on the conversation she had held with Gerald, and judiciously concluded, that more is to be obtained from credulity than from charity. She was shocked at the idea of that prevalent selfishness, which precludes benevolence in favour of momentary gratification. Both perhaps, cannot conveni-

ently be attended to ; and it is to be lamented that the latter so generally prevails, as to exclude the possibility of giving way to the former.

During the conversation of Gerald and Martha, the gypsies were forming themselves into different parties—some of them were quarrelling, others were *slyly* courting ; and thus passed the day without any material occurrence, except that of constructing temporary hovels for the night, as is their custom wherever they intend to remain beyond four-and-twenty hours. The next morning, however, Martha determined to make one more effort to regain her liberty. She therefore, with great humility, pleaded her cause before the august assembly ; but found to her sorrow, that it was already become a hopeless one. They all with one voice, insisted that she and the child should be immediately colored. Martha thought it best to submit with patient resignation, and she and Alfred were bedaubed by the old chief, with a liquid from a phial, which in a moment, produced the required effect.

No sooner was this strange and deceptive ceremony performed, than the company divided into different parties, in order to cross the forest in its various directions. By a contrivance of Gerald's, Martha and the little Alfred were of the groupe of which he was superintendant. They took a long and circuitous ramble ; Martha avoiding, as much as possible, those trifling depredations which she was sometimes compelled to commit, and which

as much obviated on the part of Gerald, as herself. Whenever necessity obliged her to conform to her new character, she delivered up Alfred to the care of another woman, determined that *he* should not risk the danger she so unwillingly encountered.

At the end of a fortnight, the whole gang met, as had been agreed on at their parting, in Needwood forest, in Staffordshire. The campaign had been very lucrative. Silver spoons, brass candlesticks, and a variety of provisions and spirits, had been safely conveyed into their wallets, and they determined on passing two or three days at least, in reconnoitering their old haunts about Needwood which, as they visited but once a year, might have undergone various changes of inhabitants since their last visit. Martha had likewise, something to urge in her own favour; she had, indeed, chiefly devoted herself to fortune-telling, and was become, under the instructions of Gerald, a tolerable proficient. Her hand had been frequently crossed with pieces of silver by boarding-school misses and antique virgins.—To the former, she promised rich husbands—to the latter, speedy ones. For the little Alfred too, she had a ready tale of woe, which, though far from being the true one, (for on that she durst not venture, for fear of detection from her comrades,) was yet frequently successful; so that upon the whole, she was of more service to the community than they had at first apprehended.

On the second day of their arrival in the forest, they held a great rejoicing, as is customary on the anniversary of their return to their favorite place. This is usually followed by one or more couples uniting in marriage; but at this time, one only entered the holy life. The nuptial ceremony with them is extremely brief—the parties merely acknowledging themselves to be husband and wife before their company, who ever afterwards regard them as sacredly united, and there seldom occurs an instance of their proving unfaithful to the contract.

There was something frank and jovial about these people, that even the conscientious Martha could not fail to admire. They were tender, humane, and generous towards each other—in sickness, affectionate—in health, good-humored and cheerful. Martha was soon convinced of the truth of this assertion, by Gerald's being taken suddenly ill—a deputy was immediately appointed to go in search of a chicken to make broth for him, who had orders not to return without one.

The chicken was accordingly taken from an adjacent farm-yard; but Gerald's disease baffled their endeavors to overcome it, and in a few days, Martha and another woman were appointed to attend him in a hut, while the others were employed in their perambulations about the forest.

Gerald became visibly terrified by the prospect of death. His life had not been blackened

soul crimes, but he had for many years, practised the art of imposing on benevolence, and could not be deemed *an honest man*. This he lamented to Martha, in openly confessing to her what had been his mode of life, and in explaining to her several mysteries of their order, with which she was till then unacquainted. Some of these were so repugnant to the mind of Martha, that she began again to consider on the most probable means of escape. She represented to Gerald, that his illness was chiefly owing to the wickedness of his pursuits, and that it was natural for the body to be tortured, when conscience could not sleep in peace. Gerald, who had all the weakness and credulity of age, united to his present repentance, paid the most implicit observance to the words of Martha—and at length determined, that he would renounce the gypsy life, and take to begging only. Martha was rejoiced at this reformation, and strengthened his purpose by every persuasive argument. In a short time Gerald recovered, and sending away his other attendant to join the gang, remained in the hut with Martha and Alfred only.

The time now drew near for their return, and Gerald, once more, took charge of *his* part of the flock, some of whom, soon after, disgusted him by those practices, of which he had himself frequently set the example. Frequent and long were the conversations held by him and Martha, on the subject of their future

plan. At length they agreed to quit the community altogether—but as that business must be managed with the utmost secrecy, it was necessary to use deception—and they therefore agreed to feign a misunderstanding between them, the better to conceal their intentions. But several months wore away before they could fix on any safe and eligible plan. At a sudden and unexpected one presented itself. Old Mary, the chief, died, and it was necessary to elect a new one. The choice fell on a middle-aged woman, against whom, not Martha, but Gerald, had conceived a particular aversion. She was an adept in wickedness, and had given many proofs of the depravity of her heart, by stealing of children, and encouraging the young beginners to the commission of every crime. It was she, whom Martha always suspected of taking away Alfred—though, through their existing law of never betraying each other, she could never ascertain the fact, yet a thousand observations she made on this woman, at length fully confirmed her first belief.

The two friends, at length so happily concerted their measures, as to make their escape without suspicion—and by traversing the rarely unfrequented by their gang, eluded the vigilance of pursuit, should it, contrary to their expectations, be attempted.

CHAPTER XXV.

Secrets and Revelations.

ALFRED had nearly attained his third year, at the time of his quitting Needwood forest, in company with Martha and Gerald. The latter, by means of a mixture, which he always carried about him, effectually took off their stains ; and the expressive features of Alfred, restored to their natural hue, presented him a perfect cherub to the fond eyes of his maternal friend. They proceeded to Bath, by the high road ; and the little Alfred's bare feet and curling hair, frequently attracted the notice of the gay travellers, who could not refuse the beautiful and lipping little mendicant their assistance.

They passed upwards of two months on the road ; and, following the example of their superiors, arrived at Bath in the beginning of its most prosperous season, Martha and Alfred soliciting at one end of the town, and Gerald constantly at the opposite one. At night they retired to a lodging provided by Gerald, who, though he did not live with them, usually passed his evenings, and they reciprocally related the events of the day.

They continued at Bath, like the *fashionables*, until nothing more was to be got there, and passed above a year in wandering over Somersetshire, where they were so far success-

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ful, as to acquire more than a hundred
—and then found that it was time to
scene, being too well known to remain
with safety any longer. Many threats
been issued, but none put in execution, by
neighbouring magistrates; for they were
perfectly inoffensive, and craved charity
so much humility, that those, who also
a right to chastise them as vagabonds,
frequently administered to their apparent
ties.

Martha, having long since found, that Gerald adhered to his resolution of renouncing
immoral conduct, and being solicitous to
quire after Admiral Sydney, and to endeavour
to gain for Alfred, all the rights which
might derive from consanguinity or other
determined to reveal to Gerald such particu-
lars, as might be necessary to induce him to
accompany her to London, to make the proper
enquiries, and to avail herself of what
might there learn, in behalf of the poor
Alfred. She had been too narrowly watched
ever since she joined the gypsy tribe, to
as she ardently desired, her escape; and
was now influenced by a sense of gratitude
not to desert Gerald, whom she found to be
protector both to herself and the child.

One evening, therefore, when Alfred
gone to sleep, Martha prefaced what she
going to say, by observing how much she
gratified by the honest conduct of Gerald,
that she could now trust him with a

she did not mean to reveal to any one in the world, but the parties concerned. Gerald looked at her attentively, and in a way that convinced her she might proceed.

She then told him how she was situated, at the time Mrs. Johnstone came to her cottage—the character and behaviour of her husband—the birth of Alfred—his being the grandson of Admiral Sydney—the extreme distress she suffered in consequence of the conduct of the gypsies, which she thought it right to recapitulate, so as to work on the feelings of Gerald—and the necessity there was of endeavouring to do justice to the child, by identifying him to the family; promising, at the same time, to reward Gerald for his care and protection, in a manner proportionate to the reward she might herself receive.

Gerald, who had patiently attended, expressed his satisfaction at being made the confidant of such a secret, and reproached Martha for not having sooner communicated it. He became anxious for the welfare of Alfred, and proposed their immediate departure.

London and its vicinity, were now the objects they had in contemplation. But they determined on making their journey thither somewhat long, in order, if possible, to accumulate a larger sum; and, in the event of their finding out the admiral, to clothe Alfred, previous to his seeing him, in a manner becoming his grandson.

Martha had instructed the child to solicit

charity in the most humble, yet faithful manner—which, added to the infantine sweetness of his person, seldom failed to create attention, to which youth, beauty, and innocence, are so justly entitled. She always perceived him a signal who, and who not to address. His expressive eyes watched every turn of her countenance—and his affection for her was as great as if he had been old enough to appreciate the value of the friend he possessed in her. She had ever strictly prohibited him to use improper means of exciting compassion. He was never urgent or troublesome in his petition. A first repulse was to him a decisive one, and was received without complaint or murmur.

As Alfred was one day walking the Crescent with his mother (as he was wont to call her,) he ran up, without asking her consent, to a dignified clergyman, in whose countenance he anticipated benevolence. With a low bow, he told his artless and often-repeated tale—which was simply, that he was very poor, and begged for pity. Martha stood at some distance, astonished by a forwardness that she had never before perceived in him, and felt a rising displeasure, and a desire to check him against going up to any one in future, without her permission. Her motive for this, was the impossibility of his being able to discriminate by countenances, to whom it was proper to apply, and she had hitherto, by her own skill in physiognomy, guarded him from the influence of those, whose very looks betrayed the hard

ness of their hearts. The event, however proved that the young *Lavater* was in the right ; for the gentleman whom he addressed, was no other than the late worthy and excellent dean of Offory—that honor to the church, and ornament of society. He enquired of Alfred, whether all he had learned consisted in the art of begging? Alfred immediately went upon his knees, and emphatically repeated the Lord's Prayer. The dean was so well satisfied, that he affectionately patted his head—slipped a half-crown piece into his hand—and said, in the hearing of Martha, that it was a thousand pities he was not better provided for.

Gerald entertained for Alfred the most sincere and growing affection. He was so strictly scrupulous in his integrity to Martha, that he would never suffer a shilling of their money to be expended on himself; but would on the contrary, declare, that he gained more than sufficient to supply his own wants, and that the overplus should, at his death, be theirs. Gerald was a reformed man. He spoke with detestation of his former way of life, and contributed by every means in his power, to plant the seeds of morality in the young breast of Alfred.

They proceeded towards London—Gerald promising faithfully to use every exertion to discover whether Admiral Sydney was living; but so ignorant was he, as well as Martha, of the means of doing so, and he was bound to secrecy, on her part, by an oath so sacred, that

it was impossible for them to gain even the most distant intelligence.

After having wandered, unsuccessful in the pursuit, for some weeks, in the streets of the metropolis Martha proposed to Gerald to accompany her to Marlborough forest, where she might, perhaps, obtain secret information of her husband ; though she was resolved not to discover herself to him. It was agreed, that she and Alfred should remain concealed near the town, while Gerald went to make the necessary enquiries. His first care was, by her direction, to go to the house of Mr. Munro, in his character of a beggar ; but he soon returned, with the mournful information of that gentleman's having been dead two years.

The next morning, he proceeded, with his wallet and his staff, to the forest. Following the directions of Martha, he easily ascertained her cottage, and enquired of the people who inhabited it, what was become of her and Luke Thompson ? ‘ Alas ! ’ answered the woman, ‘ I never knew either of them ; but Luke is, I know, transported beyond seas for fourteen years, and poor Martha they say, was murdered some years back by him, in the forest, with a child that she had the care of. The neighbours wonder that I have the courage to live in this house—for, Martha, they say, and the child, have been seen wandering about it ever since.’

‘ They may have *supposed* so,’ returned Gerald ; ‘ but, I think, I can positively assure you

that Martha and the child are both living and well. But for what was Luke Thompson transported ?

‘ Why, *that* I can tell you.—They say, that he robbed that child, which belonged to a great lady, who died here, of all the money that she had given to Martha to take care of him, and that he made off with it, and did not return till some months after Martha was missing. The neighbours were all up in arms, and had him before the justice, and he took an oath that he did not know what was become of her or the child ; but said that he fancied, from what he had often heard her say, that she was gone to look after the child’s great relations in London. However, though the justice let him go, the neighbours were resolved to rout him out of this place, he sold off his things and went away. He never returned to Marlborough ; but, about a year back, we heard, that he was tried at Taunton, in Somersetshire, for swindling, and was sent soon after to *Botany-Bay*—from whence, it is hoped by all who know him, that he will never return.’

Gerald listened attentively to this discourse, and treasured in his mind every particle of it that could tend to the satisfaction of Martha, to whom he returned early in the evening.—Her generous heart sympathized in the sufferings of her husband—sorrows he could have none, for he was by nature callous to sensibility.—but she suspected, and dreaded his further progress in vice, and before Gerald’s return,

had anticipated some criminal event, which in communication but too fully justified.

Martha became sufficiently recovered to leave Marlborough, and having no inducement to remain there, proposed to Gerald their instant departure. Neighbour Goodman had also left the place—for Gerald, who had been particular in his enquiries, had not forgotten her, and learned that she was gone to reside with her daughter, married to a rich farmer in Lincolnshire.

The third day was appointed for the commencement of their tardy journey to London, when Gerald was again taken ill, and rendered incapable of proceeding. The same ideas which had just before preponderated in the breast of Martha, now assailed him, and in return for her confidence, he became equally communicative. The history of Gerald was short, but it was interesting—he gave it to her as follows.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The History of Gerald.

I AM ashamed to own that I am a younger son, of respectable parentage. With my birth I inherited a comfortable provision, and was nurtured in the luxuries of high life. Educated under the first masters, my refractory

temper was the bane of my advancement, and I became detested in proportion as my abilities increased, which, instead of adding to my renown, became my most untoward enemies, and militated against every serious wish which now and then counterbalanced my wayward propensities.

‘ Scarcely had I attained my sixteenth year, ere I was the terror and indignation of all around me. The few boys that loved and followed my example, were reprobated as dangerous companions to the others, and I was actually forbidden to mix with any of them. My pride rose indignantly at the idea of the superior favour which they enjoyed, and I hated them in proportion as they merited my esteem.

‘ The early death of my father released me from a situation which was latterly become obnoxious to me. I knew that I was the sole inheritor of his property, and my sanguine hopes gave it a value which it never possessed. From the moment that I was informed of his sudden demise, I gave myself up to boundless and indecent joy; nor could the view of my widowed and disconsolate mother draw from my callous breast a sentiment of pity or concern. My outward form was clothed in mourning, while all within was extacy.

‘ An elder brother of my father’s was appointed by him to superintend, with my mother, the guardianship of my person and property. An apoplectic fit soon after, happily

released me from the dogmatical precepts of my uncle, and my mother was too indulgent too kind by nature, to thwart my inclinations, however opposite to her own or to consider me in any other light than that of an only and darling child, whose very crimes were in her eyes only youthful follies, and whose rising genius proclaimed the wisdom of Socrates, with the eloquence of Cicero.

‘ Thus tutored by misplaced kindness, it was not long before I took the reins in my own hands, and began to command where it was my duty to obey. The recollection of my affectionate father no longer obtruded on my memory. I practised the severity of my uncle—admired his tyranny, and copied it, not only over the servants, but over every household animal, which I resolved to affright, and make tremble at my name.

‘ Ere I had attained my twentieth year, my mother became urgent for me to marry. She requested that I would make my own choice, and being at that time enamoured of a young lady, whose family, character, and fortune were unexceptionable, I had no inclination to disobey her. The lovely Mary was the daughter of a respectable clergyman in Yorkshire. She had an elder sister, who had been married some years, and a brother who was a lieutenant in a regiment of foot. Their mother had long been dead, and Mary Atkinson presided as mistress over her father’s house.

‘ It was easy for me to perceive the cold in-

difference with which I was regarded, both by Mr. Atkinson and his son. The very servants of the family frowned on my approach. The gentle Mary alone looked on me with complacency; to my proposal of marriage, Mr. Atkinson gave an *unwilling* consent—it was extorted by the tears of his daughter—reprobated by the stern looks of his son. I led her trembling to the altar—I received her vows, and to my eternal disgrace, had scarcely exchanged, ere I falsified my own! The novelty of marriage was no sooner over than satiety succeeded it, and I began to curse the folly that had deprived me of my liberty, and devoted those days which other young men pass in youthful gratification, to the study of domestic drudgery, and to the caprices of a family.

My mother and Mr. Atkinson were now almost inseparable. They resided in the same town, and one of them seldom had an opinion in which the other did not concur. Young Atkinson had likewise joined them, and my wife and myself seemed as perfectly excluded from the trio, as if we had not belonged to it.

To my growing indifference for *her*, this was chiefly to be attributed. I fancied myself considered in no other light than a play-thing for the amusement of a child; and that my mother had enlisted under the banners of my foes; determined to conquer my freedom, or perish in the attempt, my proud heart revolted at the idea, and I resolved to make them *feel* that I was not to be played upon. I began by

reproaching my wife with the cold disdain of her father and the insolence of the puppy, brother. She lamented their errors with much tenderness, that I blamed her mistaken fondness for them; which had weaned her cruelly said, from the first of all duties, duty of an affectionate wife. I upbraided her too with the estrangement of my mother's affection, with the loss of my own happiness and with every concomitant fatality.

‘She heard me with angelic patience, while the tear of disappointment and affliction moistened her beautiful cheek. She tenderly asked, whether her absenting herself from me, and returning to the bosom of her father, would recal my wandering peace?—I interpreted her meaning, to her being tired of the chain which bound her, and bade her seek happiness elsewhere. Her timid temper took the alarm; and hastening to her chamber, she left me in a frame of mind, that a continual repentance has never been able to erase from my memory. I thought her absence longer than usual, and rang the bell with violence. It was answered by a footman, who informed me that his mistress was gone out, without leaving any message when her return was to be expected.

‘I snatched up my hat and went instantly to the house of Mr. Atkinson. I asked for my wife. The servant hesitated, answered me no, but ran up stairs; and in a moment lieutenant Atkinson joined me in the parlour.

‘ With a countenance that bespoke rage and insolence, he enquired what were my commands ?—

‘ I demand my wife.

‘ *Your* wife, I am grieved to say, Sir, is *my* sister ; when you know how to treat her *as such*, I may perhaps condescend to meet you on more even ground. My sister is under the protection of *her* father and *your* mother, both are now in the house ; but I have spared them the pain of the present meeting, in order to prove, that where the honor and happiness of a virtuous woman are at stake, no arm is so proper to avenge them, as the arm of a brother.

‘ A sarcastic sneer accompanied the last words ; indignation was fast rising in my throat, nor did I endeavour to control it. High words succeeded, and we parted with a promise of meeting the next morning, when our pistols should determine the cause, in a manner more decisive than words.

‘ I returned home immediately, and sat up till a late hour ; but my wife returned not. I was preparing to go to bed, when a single knock announced a messenger. The following note was put into my hands—

‘ My brother speaks so incomprehensibly of your late conversation with him, that none of us can conjecture its import. I wish to return home ; but he says, that he is to see you in the morning, and has forbidden my doing so, until that interview is over. A strange and hitherto unknown dread has seized me ;

say but the word, and I will steal from the house, as soon as the family is retired to rest. My dear mother has herself undertaken to send these lines to you, and will watch the return of her messenger.

‘ To this I simply returned a verbal answer, that I was going to bed, and thought she had better remain where she was.

‘ I passed the night in sleepless agitation, and towards morning, fell into a state of stupefaction, but it could not be called rest. Terror suddenly aroused me; I seized my watch, and found that half an hour had passed since the appointed time of my rendezvous with lieutenant Atkinson. I dressed myself and repaired to the appointed place. I apologized for my tardiness—his tone was altered since the preceding evening, and he waved all ceremony. We fired together. My left shoulder was slightly grazed; my antagonist staggered, and fell. The ball had pierced his right side, and the blood flowed copiously. I raised him from the ground; he endeavoured to stifle the momentary pangs which remorse had rendered visible—conjured me to be satisfied by his assurance, that I had met him as a man of honor—but recommended it to me, in case of the worst, to save myself by flight.

‘ I repaired to a neighbouring farm-house, and sent for my confidential servant, to whose care I committed my property. He received my orders to join me in London, and obeyed me with fidelity and alacrity. The intelligence

that he brought was of an alarming nature.— The young lieutenant was slowly recovering of his wound; but the anguish of Mr. Atkinson's mind had so far preyed on his health, as to menace a slow, but certain period to his existence. My wife was sinking faster into her grave—her naturally delicate constitution had yielded what little remained of its strength, to the fond remembrance of the man, who had raised his arm against a much-loved brother's life. My mother was the only one of the three who supported with any sort of firmness, the heavy visitation of which I alone was the cause. My wife was gone wholly to reside with her; but the intimacy with Mr. Atkinson and his son was not in the least diminished.

‘ I returned to the wayward propensities of my youth. Dice and the billiard-table, bad company and extravagance, were the resources to which I flew, in order to exterminate the corroding monster, reflection. I assumed another name; and, by carefully avoiding the society of those who knew me, gave a loose to those jarring sensations, which must ever assail the mind, not dead to virtue, but violently opposing it.

‘ In turning over the different newspapers, I frequently beheld the oft-repeated advertisement, ‘ If the gentleman, who left his house and family in Yorkshite, will return to his wife, all matters will be happily adjusted, &c. &c.’ But the blush of shame overspread my cheek, while I represented to myself the return of the

prodigal son ; and that shame precluded the possibility of reformation. I could not look at those whom I had so grievously injured, and could not see the finger of scorn pointed, without raising a dagger to destroy it ; and as strange as it may appear, I wished for death, yet, wanting the courage to strike the blow, I plunged into almost every vice that would most speedily accelerate it. When I say vice, I do not mean that guilt towards others should be included ; I was no one's enemy but my own. Constant intoxication and gambling were the arms which I raised against myself ; and I knew that it was not in human nature long to contend with them.

Thus passed six years, and I had not completed the six-and-twentieth year of my age, when my constitution became debilitated, and my faculties impaired. My steward had already answered me, that not another shilling remained in his hands, and that he had surrendered his trust. The money-lenders next became the object of my research. Those rapacious vultures, that prey on carcases, finished what I had so wretchedly begun, and my ruin was completed by the desertion of my friends. Humiliation rendered me desperate. I became frantic, and plunged into the most inordinate excesses. Finding, however, that all resources failed, and that I no longer possessed the means of necessary support, I at length determined on a last and painful expedient. With an agonized heart, I wrote

My friends of new acquaintance, and my old friends, were my own example, and I was particularly anxious to conclude my several letters with an assurance, that on the success of their efforts, would depend my future existence, and return to my family and home. I even declared, that gratitude, to *them* would, alone prompt the latter; since it was incompatible with my feelings to shew myself an object of compassion, and be received as such, by those certainly nearest, and who ought to be dearest to me.

Not even this heart-appealing supplication could strike from their obdurate souls, one spark of humanity! Most of my letters remained unanswered; and those that were noticed, produced nothing but regret for my condition. Detesting mankind, and more particularly myself, I resorted to strange and bye-places, and began to solicit public charity. Some of the gentleman still clung about me, and, even in the refusals which I frequently met with, there was a conciliatory kindness, that softened disappointment. From bad, worse ensued, and I descended to the lowest order of society. The clothes that I now wore were befitting my situation. They bespoke extreme indigence, and were emblematic of the misery they covered. Custom, they say, reconciles all things; and certainly in this instance, I found the old adage verified. I became reconciled to my situation, and from example

T

and habit, was worthy to be pronounced a sturdy beggar.

‘ In a heart that is not sufficiently depraved to drown every shadow of remorse, a faint and lingering attachment to its native home remains, and the tear of wounded memory often swells indignantly. I was not hardened enough to forget that I had a mother and a wife, and I became solicitous to know their fate. In my humble capacity I journeyed into Yorkshire—and the fear of discovery urged me to join a company of strolling players, who, perceiving somewhat of humor and whimsicality about me, made no difficulty to admit me as one of their party.

‘ From a beggar then, I soon became a king—nor did my poverty by day decrease my regal grandeur by night. We went on a sharing scheme; but our profits on each representation, seldom exceeded a few pence; with sometimes, but not often, a sufficiency of candle to light us to our beds. Finding this to be the case, and my companions knowing the profession which I followed when I joined them, I proposed to retain my begging capacity in the day-time, which, by means of a patch over my left eye, and one leg artfully tied up, would disguise me sufficiently from the inhabitants, and they acceding to my proposal, the double trade answered all my purposes, and for a long time I practised it.

‘ Without much difficulty, I gained every intelligence of my family. My wife and her

It was not until after the war that I learned that my mother was in the United States. I was in what part of the United States? This was I become a foreigner in the United States.

The itinerant company to which I was committed as vagabonds, to the house of correction; and it was fortunate that on that day engaged in my quality of mendicant, and escaped the general catastrophe. It was, however, high time for me to decamp, and leaving with them, as stage properties, my patch and wooden leg, I made the best of my way, once more, to the metropolis.

In the neighbourhood of St Giles, I fixed my abode; and was, for several years, so successful an adept in my business, that I realized a very considerable sum of money.

Idleness was now become habitual to me; and, though I had a fair opportunity, I was determined not to renounce my wandering life. I knew mankind too well, to place dependence on them, and conceived the desire I practised but a fair retaliation of the injuries I had endured.

Upwards of sixteen years have elapsed, since I embraced the gypsy life; and my money, carefully secreted, has hitherto remained undiscovered. Here, Martha, in this leathern bag, is a sufficiency to compensate for the villainy of your husband. To Alfred and to yourself I bequeath it. Pursue your road to Lon-

by the wife, and may all good angels be
in their keeping !

She ended the history of Gerald, and
was deeply affected by it. She received
it, and could with difficulty prevail on
her intreaties or her tears, to appropriate
twenty pounds for his future wants. More
than two hundred were now added to her
party ; yet she resolved on continuing her
present mode of life, as the most likely means
in her power to discover the admiral, or any other
part of the Sydney family.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



REGARDO

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.



BY THE LATE

MR. THOMAS BELLAMY.



VOL. III.



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1802.

THE BEGGAR BOY.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Fidelity and Discretion.

THE next morning Martha, by persuasion of her friend, set forward with her charge, after taking of Gerald a tender farewell, and promising to be frequent in her enquiries after him. She made many fruitless researches in London, and then wandered into Hertfordshire, where she was one day accosted by a female gipsy, whom she recollected to be her old acquaintance of the community; and who informed her that she was now the chief of a gang, which, in the summer season, constantly pitched their tents in the forest of Norwood—making the several towns and villages of the county of Surry their winter habitations. She invited Martha and Alfred to join them; and the former, despairing of finding the only ob-

He was now verging on his sixth year—he could read, write his name, and make acute observations. Like Douglas, he would have disdained a shepherd's life; his aspiring soul beheld future days of glory. Already in romantic vision he anticipated prosperous days. But Douglas was a Caledonian warrior, and Alfred was not even a soldier of fortune. His life, however infantine, was already a compound of vicissitude, which, though he was unable wholly to comprehend, he had already sufficiently studied, to form from it an inconsistent combination of ideas, yet sufficient to prove the enthrallments of every situation, with which every species of life is invariably connected. Much time and mental anxiety were devoted by Martha, but devoted in vain. No trace of the admiral could she discover, and

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lamented in silent sorrow, the dark cloud which hung suspended over the head of Alfred, in which no ray of light had hitherto appeared.

Soon after his short interview with Mr. Cas, Martha returned to London, and hired a humble, but neat lodging, in a retired and yet neighbourly neighbourhood. She considered the money given to her by Gerald, as a sacred deposit for the use of Alfred; and that a part of it should be applied in the manner that she would have applied that of his mother, in giving him a decent education. She accordingly found a very reputable day-school, where, in a few months, he not only acquired the common elements, but felt so keen a love of knowledge, as to become indefatigable in his labours for improvement, possessing an emulation seldom found at so early a period of life.

Martha lodged with a Mrs. Smith, an elderly but respectable widow-woman, who had for many years kept a small chandler's shop, or rather one of that accommodating nature, which holds out to the needy neighbours a ready supply of every thing. It was to this person she addressed herself, both for a school for Alfred, and for a recommendation to take plain work and other trifles, to enable her, she said, to procure a comfortable subsistence; Martha carefully avoided exciting any suspicion of her being in possession of any more money, than that which she could acquire by her resources.

She was frequent in her visits to the place described by Gerald, but it was impossible for her to procure any tidings of him. The time insensibly rolled on, Martha and Alfred equally gratified, the first by her comparatively comfortable situation, and the rapid progress made by Alfred, and himself by the kindness of his master, the friendship of his school-fellows, and more than all, by the extreme facility with which his mind became enlarged, and rendered capable of appreciating the value of education.

It was a frequent custom with Mrs. Smith, to request Martha, when she was unemployed, to make up her little parcels of tea, sugar, &c. and for this she supplied her, as is customary, with remnants of old newspapers, manuscripts and other portions of waste paper, provided for that purpose. Martha was fond of reading in *her* way, and frequently amused herself with the odd paragraphs and advertisements that occasionally excited her notice. She was one evening packing up some tea, and picking out an unsoiled leaf of a newspaper, when her eye fell suddenly on the name of Sydney. Alarmed, she perused the paragraph which announced the death of the admiral on a journey. That circumstance precluded her discovery of his dwelling-place, which would naturally have led her to make enquiries after his surviving family.

She was ruminating on this event when Alfred came running home. On seeing him,

into tears, and laid her hand over him with inexpressible fondness. Alfred terrified, and enquired into the cause of her distress. She answered him evasively; but, as he became more urgent, 'Alas! my child,' said she, 'we have lost our only friend! He, who would have befriended the orphan, is now no more.' Alfred endeavoured to find out who could be his friend, of whom he had never heard mention; but Martha repulsed his curiosity, and became silent on the subject.

In coarse, but decent mourning, she clothed herself and him; and this made a lasting impression on his memory, and excited a fervent desire for the elucidation of a mystery, which he now plainly perceived was attached to himself; but he respected Martha too much, to endeavour to force from her a confession, from which he found her absolutely averse.

After some months consideration, she resolved to consult Mr. Norton, Alfred's schoolmaster, on the subject of providing him with a proper situation. Long experience had taught her, that he was a man every way qualified for such a trust. She had been in the habit of frequently calling on him, and had met with civility and respect, both from himself and his wife. Dressing herself, therefore, one fine afternoon, in her new black gown she went to his house, about half a mile from that in which she lived. She was received with courtesy, and Mr. Norton, far from guessing the motive of her visit, began a conversation

which immediately led to it. He passed high encomiums on the acuteness and promising talents of Alfred; his mild and generous temper, and his enthusiastic love of learning; and finished by observing, that he thought it a pity he was not brought up to some liberal business, wherein such talents might turn to high account.

Martha then informed him, that she was come purposely to request his advice on that subject, as she thought that he was now, of an age to judge what kind of business he would prefer.

Alfred, who was in the garden, playing with one of Mr. Norton's sons, some years older than himself, and to whom he was particularly attached, was now called in, and the foregoing question put to him by Mr. Norton, in the most affectionate and conciliating manner. He represented to him the inability of Martha to support him, that the time was approaching, when it would be proper for him to support her in his turn, and pointed out to him the necessity of his making choice of some business suiting his station, to gain his livelihood, in order to become at once a respectable and reputable member of society. He enquired whether he was inclined to adopt a sedentary or an active life?

Alfred, wholly unprepared for so important a crisis, knew not at first how to answer. He paused—sighed—paused again—then laying hold of Martha's hand, which he pressed with

Alfred, while his eyes glistened with tears, declared he could bear any idea, save that of leaving his mother. He declared he should prefer pursuing his learning, and hoped in time, to be enabled to assist his master, for whom he entertained a very sincere regard, and a high esteem.

Mr. Norton replied, that he should like him as an apprentice, but that his poverty was the only obstacle which could prevent him from making choice of him. Martha desired Alfred to return to his young friend, and as soon as he was gone, enquired of Mr Norton what sum it would be necessary to give with him? His answer was, that to one in *her* circumstances it might seem cruel, and would certainly prove useless to mention it. However, as she seemed anxious about it, fifty pounds was what he must find himself obliged to require.

Martha, who had never told Mr. Norton that the boy was her own, now informed him that she was a widow, who had once seen better days, and had lived in better circumstances; and that, as she had determined from his childhood on giving him a good education, she had, under all the different changes she had experienced, laboured hard to save the money which she had originally intended for the purpose of putting him out. She concluded by saying, that it was in her power to give him fifty pounds, relying on the humanity of his disposition to treat the boy with kindness, and to instruct him in his own profession. Mr.

Norton expressed no less surprize at the commendation of her conduct. He agreed to take Alfred as soon as he had completed his twelfth year, which would take place within two months; and he was accordingly bound to Mr. Norton at that period, by the name of Alfred Sydney Johnstone, Martha having herself adopted the latter name ever since her residence in London.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A Meeting of Old Friends.

WE will pass over the three succeeding years of Martha's and of Alfred's life—nothing worthy of being related here, marked either. A state of servitude was inimical to the feelings of Alfred; but he struggled to repress pride, and obeyed with cheerful acquiescence the many unpleasant commissions which he had frequently the care of discharging. The hours that he passed with Martha were free and unrestrained; with no other could he hold that social converse which was so dear to his heart; for he had scrupulously fulfilled the promise extorted from him by her, never to reveal, until *she* thought proper, the mysteries of his early life.

Martha was now an old inhabitant of the neighbourhood, and had the esteem and good

will of all those to whom she was known. The conduct of Alfred towards her was dutiful and amiable, and her affection for him fell little short of adoration. His rapid improvements were to her a source of delight, on which she failed not to expatiate to all her acquaintance. Martha longed to be equally communicative in regard to his birth; her vanity was hurt, that the grandson of an admiral should be only a common apprentice; but it was flattered by the reflection that it was herself who had reared and supported him. Prudence, however, kept her silent; and the fond hope that he would be one day acknowledged by his great relations, and that she would be made a fine lady of, transported her warm and sanguine heart.

She was one morning walking down Holborn, when to her equal astonishment and satisfaction, she beheld Gerald begging at a door. She ran towards him; he instantly recognized, and met her with unfeigned delight. Her sable dress excited curiosity—he was soon relieved from it by the assurance that Alfred was well. Gerald accompanied her to her humble habitation, and they were shortly after joined by Alfred, who shed tears of joy and gratitude. Gerald expressed the most lively satisfaction at the altered appearance of them both. The neatness of Martha's dress, and the increased corpulency which bespoke her mind at ease, refreshed the withering heart of Gerald, as he surveyed her with an affection-

ate regard. The height of stature and address of Alfred surprized and gratified her. The latter was soon obliged to leave them, as he had been sent by Mr. Norton on some official errand, and had, as was his usual custom, expedited his business, that he might snatch a few moments to devote to Martha.

As soon as he had left them, Gerald recounted to her the manner in which he had passed his time since they parted. The reader will remember that Martha left him ill at Marlborough. His confinement was severe and long, and his finances became through it nearly exhausted. He had with much difficulty, reached London a few days before, and was once more reduced to begging, through real necessity.

Martha gave him a circumstantial description of all that she had done relative to herself and to Alfred. He heard her with fixed attention, and highly approved every measure she had taken. When he arose to depart, Martha forced into his hand the leathern bag, and intreated him to take back what remained of its contents. Gerald was not to be persuaded to commit, what *he* conceived would be an ignominious action. Martha was so much affected by his generous refusal, that he reluctantly took from her a small sum, to answer present emergency. They parted with mutual regret and mutual satisfaction—they had been so long accustomed to the society of each other, that the keen edge of regret which had cut their union

was yet, however blunted by time, susceptible of acquiring a higher polish, whenever chance should again direct their meeting.

Martha accepted the often repeated invitation of her friend, and promised to visit him frequently at the place where he had first directed her. Their intercourse continued uninterrupted for several weeks, when Gerald was taken more seriously ill than he had hitherto been; he sent a faithful messenger to request Martha's immediate attendance. She was not long in obeying the dictates of friendship and gratitude, and from a visitant, became a constant attendant upon him, usually passing the whole day by his bed-side, and administering whatever he wanted, returning in the evening to her home.

Alfred, following the laudable example of his mother, solicited, and obtained permission of Mr. Norton, to visit her frequently at the lodgings of Gerald. He was unbounded in his gratitude towards the latter. The care which had in helpless infancy preserved him, now seemed to be converted into a tower of defence, which it was his duty to strengthen with his last breath, for the service of his patron and benefactor.

The seeds of industry and virtue were fast ripening in the heart of Alfred. Humanity glowed there with the fire of genius, and the sage admonitions of Gerald were received and cherished by him with peculiar regard. With the most tender anxiety, Gerald pointed out

to him the storms and quicksands of life, and the signs by which he might be sometimes led to foresee, and to avoid them. He particularly expatiated on the perfidy of love, and the inconstancy of friendship. He warned him by his own experience, against those summer flies which prey on the warm fibres of dawning prosperity, yet shrink from the coldness of approaching adversity. The errors which had proved fatal to the peace of Gerald, were those which he most widely enlarged upon. The destructive vice of gaming, which he compared to a hidden rock, covered by the smooth surface of the waves, he represented as the most certain road to perdition. Opposed to that, other vices were, he said, comparatively small; but that of gambling (and a tear bedewed his venerable face while he spoke) absorbed *all* virtues. It divided the dearest connections; it broke the most tender ties; it transformed man to a monster; and revelled in the ruin which itself had created.

The disorder of Gerald increasing to a degree that hourly menaced his life, Alfred, anxious to relieve the fatigue of Martha, who was become his nurse, requested permission of Mr. Norton to let him pass the whole of the succeeding day with Gerald, whom he mentioned to be a relation in distress. His request was granted, and on the following morning, he set out with a heart lightened by the consciousness, that he was paying to the extent of his ability, however slight, a portion of the vast debt of gratitude owing by him to his friend.

When he arrived at the dark and miserable garret, in which poor Gerald reposed his worn-out limbs, he found Martha engaged with him in deep and solemn conversation. It was interrupted by his presence, and Gerald begged of him to hasten to Norwood with all dispatch, and to desire the mistress of the house, commonly called the gipsy-house, to come to him as soon as possible; having, he said, something of moment which he wished to communicate to her alone.

It was a fine morning of the early spring, when Alfred, overjoyed at the idea of being serviceable to Gerald, set out for Norwood. — The melodious warbling of the birds, and the variety of passengers which crossed the road in every direction, exhilarated his imagination, and he contrasted the comforts by which he was now environed, with the miseries attendant on, and the depraved examples of a begging and a gipsy life. In a short time he arrived at the beautiful and romantic forest of Norwood. He became for the first time, gradually susceptible of the charms of nature; and at length surveyed them with enthusiastic admiration. A lingering attachment for the scenes of his early youth, created a smile of interest and pleasure, as he beheld the tawny faces around him, and he was almost tempted to believe that in every female gipsy he beheld another Martha. He took the necessary directions, and penetrated into the thickest of the forest, where he discovered the object of his

search. The old female whom he addressed had a perfect knowledge of Gerald, and made him a faithful promise that she would see him in the morning. Alfred, after having executed his commission, was anxious to relate the success of it to his friends; but the beauty of the day, the hospitality of his hostess, and above all, the surrounding scenery, beguiled his hours—and ere he had quitted the forest, the approaching twilight warned him that it was already time for him to return to the house of Mr. Norton.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Disasters.

THE next morning the gipsy matron was early in her attendance on poor Gerald. Martha was there, but Alfred had not returned. Her consternation increased to agony. With a breaking heart she ran to the house of Mr. Norton; but there Alfred had not been seen since the preceding morning, and Mr. Norton, instead of consoling, augmented her affliction, by expressing his indignation at his having staid out all night. Martha, who had ever looked up to Mr. Norton as the adviser and friend of Alfred, was lost in astonishment at the harshness which accompanied his words, and a degree of indifference to his fate, where she ex-

pected to find the most soothing and tender anxiety. To Gerald, therefore, she returned for comfort, for in him only it now appeared to her it could be found. But alas! the angel-messenger had taken wing, and Gerald was no longer capable of imparting it. The furious rolling of his eyes, and his frequent convulsive starts, announced to her that reason had forsaken him.

The gipsy was still sitting by him, and Martha questioned her relative to the confidence which Gerald had seemed anxious to repose in her; but his endeavours had been unsuccessful. He was sensible, and could faintly articulate when Martha left him, but was soon after taken speechless, and it was easy to perceive by the distortion of his countenance, that he had no longer any knowledge of those about him. Mrs. Lee, as the lady of Norwood was denominated, seeing that she could not be of any service in the present case, went home, leaving word with Martha, that she should be ready, whenever called upon by any favorable symptom to return.

Miserable were the succeeding hours that passed, bringing no relief to the agonized heart of Martha. In every footstep she thought she heard the well-known tread of Alfred. The gloom of evening came on, and rendered the sorry habitation still more woeful. The filth and wretchedness of the house and its inhabitants, the prophane revelry of its lodgers, which not even their dying neighbour could

for a moment restrain, all struck cold horror on the heart of Martha, and she almost fancied that she saw murder committing his deed in darkness, through the perforated partitions which divided the respective chambers. The wind whistled through the walls, and the windows, more composed of paper than of glass, rattled in their mutilated frames. Martha had never seen poverty wear so hideous an aspect. One woman, rather more decent than the rest, but whose eyes were sable vouchers that she had been shortly before engaged in the feminine art of bruising, brought a glass of gin into Gerald's room, for his or Martha's acceptance, and proffered her services. The most slender mark of kindness was ever gratefully accepted by Martha, and she had a fellow-feeling for the woman, who said it was her husband that had thus unmercifully beaten her. Martha invited her to partake of a jug of a-la-mode beef, which she sent for; and the poor creature was so grateful for her good cheer, that she made a voluntary offer, which Martha was rejoiced to accept, of passing the hours of darkness with her in Gerald's chamber.

As they were sitting together in the dead of night, the stranger half asleep on a three-footed stool, and Martha bewailing to herself the absence of Alfred, and the state of Gerald, they were aroused by a deep groan which proceeded from the wretched pallet on which he lay. They flew to his assistance—he raised his glazed eyes towards heaven—then fixed them

on Martha—attempted vainly to speak, and with a short sigh expired!

Such was the end of a man whose life had been marked by uncommon vicissitude; whose misfortunes had originated in youthful follies—but whose mind was unpolluted by crimes. The eccentricity of his character became at length his safe-guard; it precluded him, however lowly his condition, from mixing, more than necessity required, with the fraternity of which he made himself a member, conscious superiority raised him above meanness; and it is probable, that had he lived a few years more, he would have returned, if not to his original respectability, at least to comparative comfort and affluence.

Martha now saw herself bereft of every thing! In the two friends she possessed, she was not only contented, but happy. Naturally of a cheerful disposition, she had obliterated all remembrance of the sorrows of her youth, and her sanguine mind had frequently suggested to her, that through Alfred's means, both herself and Gerald would close their latter days in peace. All was gone with them!—One an extended corpse before her, impressed her with the sad idea, that the other she was never more to behold. The loss of one of them, time might have instructed her to overcome; but the loss of *both*, and that together, tore her heart with anguish, and she resolved on devoting the remainder of her life to the strictest enquiries after her darling child.

She prevailed easily on her new acquaintance, Hannah, to watch over Gerald's room while she returned for a time to her own dwelling; but there obtaining no tidings of Alvan, she went to Mr. Norton, who received her with fullness, and who seemed still more than before indifferent to his fate. She conjured him to advise and assist her in the steps she should take, as most likely to discover him. He coldly answered, that it was not *his* business to look after a runaway apprentice, but that of the boy to return to his duty, and that he should not trouble himself by taking any pains about him. Martha, shocked at the unfeeling tone with which this was uttered, and by the man too of whom she had formed an opinion so different, could only give vent to her full heart, and, in an agony of tears, left his house.

She returned to Gerald's chamber, and, the next morning, went to an undertaker's near it, with whom she agreed for the funeral, at the expence of four guineas. That being settled, she returned to her own lodging—but found the house was deserted, and all her own things and money gone. Now was the measure of her woes complete!—Now was her cup of misery full! She sat down in stupid sorrow; for the tear that ought to have relieved her refused to flow! She passed more than two hours in vague conjecture. Mrs. Smith was missing, and she went to the nearest neighbour to enquire more particularly into her character than she had hitherto done. The answer

the received were such as precluded all possibility of *her* being implicated in a fraud, and some of these people came with her to examine the apartments reserved by Mrs. Smith for her own use. An old bureau, in which it was known that she always kept her money, was found broken open, and suspicions immediately fell on a young servant girl out of place, to whom Mrs. Smith was extravagantly partial, although she had been frequently cautioned against her, in consequence of the numerous depredations she had committed in her services, which Mrs. Smith could not be prevailed on to believe.

One of the women recollected that Mrs. Smith had told her the day before, that she was going to visit a sister at Islington, who was supposed to be dying. She seldom or ever went out; but when she did, or was more than commonly busy, she was in the habit of sending for this girl to look after her shop. The same woman went to her mother's, but was told that she had got a place at Redriffe, though she could not exactly tell where, and was gone to it the day before.

All this was poor satisfaction to the wounded mind of Martha. In the bitterness of her heart, she accused heaven of injustice towards her, and sorely lamented that she had ever heard the name of Sydney, since her sorrow had begun with her knowledge of it. She now saw the impossibility of her paying the last duty to her departed friend either with his or her own

money, for, excepting a solitary half-guinea and a few shillings that she had about her, she had a single resource had she in the world. She was indeed, still in possession of the admiral's miniature set in gold, for she had constantly worn it tied on her arm, but *that*, no consideration whatever could induce her to part with. She saw herself forced to countermand the funeral, as she had directed it, and consign the remains of poor Gerald to the care of the parish.

A sudden thought caught her attention—Mr. Norton having received fifty pounds with Alfred, she resolved to apply to him for so much as would satisfy the undertaker's demand, and then re-commence the life of wandering, to which providence seemed to have devoted the remainder of her care-worn days.

With reluctant steps, she once more bent her way to the school of Mr. Norton, to whom she related with many tears her piteous story. His heart was callous to the call of humanity, and he refused her humble request with the apathy of a mind skilled in worldly knowledge. Nor was it enough for him to reject her petition; he upbraided her in terms the most severe, with the desertion of Alfred, of which he said, she alone was the cause, being a natural consequence of the improper company to which she had introduced him.

Martha, finding that all her efforts to excite pity in his breast were ineffectual, and that her returning to Gerald's lodging could be of no avail, determined to go there no more, nor

longer to reside in the neighbourhood of a man whose reproaches would only remind her more forcibly of the loss of Alfred, whom she thought it more likely to discover by a life of activity and constant rambling, than by sojourning in any fixed home.

On her return to her lodgings, she found that Mrs. Smith was just come home, and was in a state nearly as deplorable as her own.—Mrs. Smith had, however, good and wealthy relations, and Martha had not a single friend in the world, nor any other tie, save that of some relations at Marlborough, who were equally as poor as herself. The few cloaths of her own and of Alfred that remained with Mrs. Smith, she sold for a mere trifle, to pay, as far as it would go, for her lodgings—but Mrs. Smith kindly refused, by accepting it, to impoverish her more and more, and none of the furniture being gone, she insisted on her passing the night there. The next morning, after taking a tender farewell of each other, Mrs. Smith promising to give Alfred a sealed letter left her by Martha, in case of his return. Martha set forward once more in her begging capacity, and bent her way to the forest of Norwood.

CHAPTER XXX.

Discoveries.

WE will now return to the wandering Alfred, whom we left coming from Norwood, elated with the success of his mission, and the good fare which he had partaken of. It was late in the evening when he entered the streets of London, and he had about half an hour's walk to Gerald's lodging, when he found himself surrounded and seized by a body of men, whom he concluded to be thief-takers, or other officers of justice. His terror would have been inconceivable, had he not been supported by that conscious integrity, which gave him courage to overcome it. In a voice, faltered by surprize, yet undaunted by fear, he eagerly demanded their business, and of what crime they had to accuse him? They muttered among themselves, while they enquired who were his parents, and from whence he came? In the innocence of his heart, he replied to each interrogatory, and the words which ought to have acquitted, condemned him. They saw in him a youth void of powerful connections; possessing spirit of mind, and vigour of body, sufficient to encounter difficulties the most arduous; and such a one was fitted to their purpose. It was a prize seldom to be met with among the puny children of indolence, and they resolved not to suffer him to escape them.

Kind words succeeded the severity of their first salutation, and they assured him that no further harm was meant, than to engage him to do something like themselves, for the benefit of his king and country.

Alfred, whose generous heart had not as yet formed any idea of treachery, was inclined to believe that these were men of the world, who were capable of instructing him in its ways, and who might probably be the means of enabling him to provide at length, for the future comfort of his mother, and their mutual friend, Gerald. They appeared happy in each other, and why should he not prefer a society of *men*, to the slavish part that he was obliged to take as a child, in the management of Mr. Norton's school and his household? Not willing to lose so favourable an opportunity of advancing his fortune, he consented to accompany them to the Admiral Hawke, near Tower-Hill resolved in his own mind, not to delay longer than another hour, the welcome intelligence to Martha and Gerald, of his being at last in the way to that preferment, which he coveted only, as it would enable *them*, his best and dearest friends, to share it.

Pleasant and enticing conversation beguiled the time, until they reached the Admiral Hawke, when they were joined by two or three more, one of them somewhat younger than Alfred. The master of the house familiarly accosted them, and seemed to be of their intimate acquaintance. One, who seemed to be

their leader, introduced Mr. Johnstone, Alfred, who had given them his name, was for the first time denominated, to his particular notice and attention, as a young gentleman who had volunteered in their service, although his birth and connections rendered him far superior to it.

Vanity over-ruled the judgment of Alfred, and though silent, he bowed acquiescence. He was requested to drink with them. He refused, under the just plea, of having never drank more than to satisfy his thirst, which was all *he* thought, that nature required. But *they* thought otherwise, and their persuasions becoming at length irresistible, Alfred was prevailed on to swallow the warm and potent gin and water, with which the master of the house and his comrades continually assailed him. In a short time he fell asleep, but was suddenly roused by a voice, to which he had been long accustomed, and which proclaimed in no sound of melody, that the twelfth hour was passed. The strength of his mind preponderated, and with giddy head, and staggering limbs, he began to reflect that Gerald was probably dying, and Martha deeply deploring his absence. He arose, and anxiously enquired the nearest way to the street in which Gerald lodged. A young man seated near him, whose countenance bespoke kindness, offered to conduct him thither, but first insisted on his bidding good-night to the company, in a glass, of which *he* would partake.

The dictates of reason worked powerfully on the mind of Alfred; but gratitude for favours received, and a wish to be considered a man, like one of them, hurried him to the last draught of intoxication—all present had combined against him—and his ruin was accomplished and inevitable.

Alfred, on awaking, found himself in a strange place, and surrounded by men whom he had never before seen. A motion too, of which he had no idea, he was now sensible of; but having never been on the water, knew not what to attribute it to. A furly-looking fellow at leng answered his enquiry in few words, by telling him that they were in a Gravesend boat, and should be on board the Hyena tender in less than an hour. All this was enigmatical to poor Alfred, who having never heard, could not possibly comprehend that the laws sanctioned such a flagrant violation of liberty. In agony of heart, he appealed to every pitying power, but they were all deaf to his petition. He looked around, but no one seemed inclined to commiserate his heavy affliction. At length a very young man, whom he had seen, but not noticed, addressed him:

‘ You appear to be unhappy, Sir !’

‘ I am indeed—but do not take an interest in my behalf, lest the rancor of my enemies should extend towards yourself.’

‘ Have you enemies, Sir ?’

‘ I lately thought that I had not—but I am torn from the only two friends I possessed on

earth, and they who committed the deed have been enemies.'

'But Sir, of what cruelty do you complain?

'Of the worst of cruelties. I am an apprentice to a respectable school-master, who has behaved to me hitherto like a father. His kindness induced him to give me a holiday when I knew that my absence was inconvenient—but it was my duty to pay attention to those, from whom I had from infancy experienced it. Arrived at the house where I was expected, I heard with deep regret that one of these was dying. He besought me to go a few miles into the country, and I obeyed him. My business was in search of an old friend of his, to whom he wished to make some particular communication. I succeeded in my mission, and was returning home joyfully, when I was stopped by a party of men, who enticed me by various ways—and at length—I take shame to myself while I relate it!—seduced me for the first time in my life, into the abominable vice of drunkenness. The return of my reason was fatal, for it shewed that I was a prisoner—I had committed no crime to deserve to be such, and I demanded an allegation to prove the grounds on which I am, not only detained here against my will, but threatened with future exile—probably slavery and death.'

The boy shook his head—Alfred continued.

'Is that look a good or evil omen of my fate?'

'You ask me, Sir, and I will tell you. Be

I must exact your secrecy—for it is treason to speak *here*. My father was, like yourself, inveigled while a boy. He had no friends that cherished him, consequently no remembrances to torment. Long servitude inured him to hardships, and at length he became accustomed to them. He embraced the life of a sailor, and gloried in his profession. Fortune favoured him, and after several years, he returned to England, and married an amiable woman. A few short months were all that were allowed him to remain with her; and these were passed in mutual happiness. When my father was commanded on board, he left my mother young with child of me, and fondly promised himself and her, that ere the time of her bringing forth, he should be again in England.

True was his prophecy. The merchant-man to which he belonged, returned laden with the spoils of the foe, and dropped her anchor in King's-Road. Her men partook of an equal distribution of prize-money, and my father was one of the first to pack up his little all in a silk handkerchief, which he slung across his shoulder, and began, by toilsome marches, to proceed on his journey southward. He had long since anticipated his Fanny's joy on hailing his safe return, and dreaming whether he should have to rejoice in a male or female child, when he was entrapped in the way that *you* have described, and forced on board of a man-of-war, bound to the West-Indies. The satisfaction of writing, to inform his Fanny of his fate, was,

with savage barbarity, denied him. My mother lived to make me the troublesome gipsy life, and soon after sunk into an untimely grave.

‘Vain have been my endeavours hitherto to find out whether my father be living or dead. As no chance remains of my discovering him, and my grandmother, by my mother’s side, who had the care of my infancy, is lately dead, I have volunteered into the sea-service, in the hope, that I may succeed in my farther inquiries respecting him. I understand that we are also bound to the West-Indies.’

Alfred started, and sighed heavily.

Their conversation was interrupted by their being turned into a man-of-war’s boat, that came along-side to receive them. It was now that poor Alfred felt all the horrors of his situation. Crammed into the hold with a set of wretches, whose blasphemies and execrations terrified him, not even the society of his young friend, who was employed as a cabin-boy, could alleviate his feelings; his own dismal reflections, to torture still more acutely his agonized bosom, operated at length as opiates on the heart of Alfred, and he sunk into a state of mental stupefaction. ‘Alas!’ said he to himself, ‘but two days since, and I was tripping gaily over the lovely forest of Norwood, and congratulating myself on my exchange from the begging and gipsy life!—Alas! how enviable would that be, compared to my present situation!—My mother and my benefactor.

too! My own misery I could support—but their's I cannot!

Such were the sorrowful reflections of the unhappy Alfred—bad provisions and hard labour were his portion. The ship to which he belonged lay three weeks in the Downs and he repeatedly requested leave to speak to one of his officers, but was as constantly refused. The indulgence of pen, ink, and paper was denied him, and many days passed before Jack Freeling, whom he now considered as his friend, could interchange with him a few words of private conversation. Through his means, a letter was sent to Martha; but, unfortunately, it was directed to Gerald's lodging, and did not arrive till several days after Martha had ceased to go there, and that Gerald was laid in the ground. The people of the house, therefore refused to pay the postage; and if they had done so, Martha would not have received it, as they were ignorant what was become of her.

It would be impossible to enumerate the many hardships which Alfred was fated to endure on board the *Leander*. He was punished for not knowing that which he had never been taught, and the wretched gang to which he belonged hated him in proportion as his principles differed from theirs.

After a tedious passage, they put into Kingston-harbour, in the island of Jamaica. The ship's company were very sickly, and it was found necessary to send them in small numbers

on shore, to regain strength, previous to return.

Young Freeling, who was high in favour with the officers, found no difficulty in having his request granted to go on shore very frequently. Johnstone, as Alfred was now called, was sometimes permitted to accompany him, and often did these young friends ramble together in Kingston and its vicinity, and one day, they observed over the door of the tavern, the name of Freeling, and Alfred's companion, always anxious about the fate of his father, determined to enquire whether the keeper of this house could give him any information. They therefore went in, and soon found an opportunity of accosting the landlord, and asked him, whether he knew any one related to the Freelings of Liverpool; to which the man replied, he did know some of them, but what of that?

'Because,' answered Jack, 'my father was at that place, which he left many years ago, and we have heard no tidings of him.'

The landlord, who had all the appearance of being purse-proud and insolent, eyed them with a look of contempt; which the latter, well liking, immediately added, 'Nay, you need not look at me like a giant and a pigmy: I don't come to crave any favour from you; I am the son of as worthy a man as yourself.'

The landlord grinned horribly a ghastly smile—'A very worthy man, I dare be sworn.'

and he, 'and so he ran away from his family, and you can't find him!'

'Ran away!' cried Jack, 'ran away no more than yourself; no, no, my father was too happy at home to run away.—He was but just married, and was dragged away by a press-gang.'

'The landlord's muscles relaxed, and from the vacant stare of contempt, he began to look at Jack with a degree of curiosity. 'And pray, young man,' said he, 'how long is it since your father was pressed?'

'If you would have patience,' answered Jack, 'I would tell you all about him and myself.' The landlord sat down. 'If you prove to be akin to me,' he said, 'you shall not want a friend in Jamaica, my lad.'

'Sir,' replied Jack, 'I don't want to prove myself akin to you—I want to find my father.'

'Well, that's right,' answered the landlord—'so now tell your story.'

Jack related it to him in nearly the same terms in which he had communicated it to Alfred.

'And so,' said the landlord with a softened voice, 'your mother died when you was born.'

'She did indeed,' answered Jack, 'and I never knew either father or mother,' and the tears came into his eyes.

'Poor boy!' cried the landlord, 'poor boy, and I suppose your grandmother often told you that you was like your mother.'

‘O yes,’ replied Jack, ‘she often told me that, and I believed loved me the better for it.’

‘Why,’ said the landlord, taking his hand, and looking in his face, ‘why, I think there is a likeness.’

‘What then,’ said the boy, ‘did you know my mother, Sir? And can you tell me any thing of my father?—Perhaps you are a relation then.’

‘I am indeed,’ replied the landlord, bursting into tears, and taking the boy in his arms—‘I am indeed, for I am your father! Poor, poor, dear Fanny! How should I have rejoiced to have shared my good fortune with her!—Well, God’s will be done! My boy you are welcome to your father.’

Alfred could not refrain his tears of joy on this occasion. ‘And who,’ asked the landlord, ‘have we here?’

‘A worthy lad,’ said Jack, ‘that has no right to be here; an apprentice boy, entrapped as you were.’

‘More’s the pity,’ cried the landlord—‘I wish, for your sake, I may be able to do him any kindness; but whilst he remains, he shall always be welcome to the best this house can afford.’

Jack and Alfred mutually expressed their thanks, and passed the remainder of the day with the landlord, in all the felicity that honest hearts feel, when providence seems visibly to interfere in the accomplishment of unexpected events, for the happiness of its creatures.

CHAPTER XXXI.

More Transitions.

MR. FREELING, the landlord, being too ill situated to think of returning to England, and too well pleased with his son to think of parting with him, arranged matters with the officers, so as that from a cabin-boy, Jack became the heir apparent to the Britannia tartan, a circumstance on which he was sincerely congratulated by Alfred, who had now remained left in the ship. During the short time he remained at Kingston, he experienced all the good-will that could be shewn him by the favour of his friend, and no means were left untried by Jack, to recommend Alfred to the favour of those officers, who had evinced a particular partiality for young Freeling. At length, however, the ship, which had been stationary, was ordered to return to England, and Alfred took an affecting farewell of his friends. The Leander had not been many days at sea, before she came in sight of a French man-of-war, to whom she gave chase. On coming up with her, an action commenced in which much gallantry and no less obduracy was displayed on both sides. The termination, however, proved unfortunate to the Leander, which was boarded by the French frigate; and in the event, Alfred found himself a prisoner of war in the hold of a vessel, where

he could witness nothing but the wretchedness and misery. They were conveyed to Havre-de-Grace, and from thence to Paris, where, waiting for an exchange of prisoners, Alfred experienced all the horrors of French prison.

In this deplorable state he continued many months, frequently contrasting his former frugalities with his present, and often with sighs lamenting, that he was not among even the meanest horde of the meanest beggars, that he might be free to rove at large among the woods and wilds of his native country. His sufferings were not a little aggravated by the consideration, that he had no share in bringing this calamity on himself; that he was in a comparatively respectable state; that he had never done, nor meditated an injury to any body whatever; and that in the very act of obeying the best impulses of his heart, he had been trepanned from happiness to misery; from freedom to slavery.

In meditations like these, passed the days and nights of the sorrowful Alfred. His soul sickened with wretchedness; his body was debilitated, and his mind almost broken. It unfortunately happened, that his fellow-prisoners vented their passions in imprecations, and he found no solace in the condolence of a kindred heart.

The joyful hour of exchange at last arrived, when Alfred, with his fellow-prisoners, was once more to taste the sweets of liberty, and be released from the most dreadful captivity.

THE BEGGAR BOY.

The prison-doors were opened, and the prisoners were conducted to the shore, and put on board a vessel, prepared for the purpose of conveying the English prisoners to Dover. The passage, it was productive of no small alarm to Alfred. For the vessel had been but a few hours at sea, before a tempest arose, and witnessed the dire effects of the most dreadful scene that nature can exhibit. A raging contest between the winds of heaven and the waves of the sea, the vessel was like an autumnal leaf in the rapid whirlwind of a desert. Alfred, with his companions, was full of terror, almost regretted the misery they had quitted—for death seemed to await them in every wave, and certain destruction seemed to await them. After suffering several hours, sometimes whirled as it were, to the French coast, and sometimes towards the English coast, a most violent gale drove them towards Goodwin Sands where the storm continued with increased violence.

For three hours, they combated the inevitable danger. At one moment, they were raised, as it were, to Heaven's highest vaults, and at the next, hurled to the edge of a bottomless abyss, where a friendly wave rescued them; at length the vessel began to leak, and the seaman's hopes were over. The captain, whose undaunted soul spurned the most terrific form, ordered the guns to be fired, and loudly proclaimed that the storm would be vanquished.

was now almost keel upwards, would have perished ere break of day. He did not, however, ever discontinue the firing of the guns, which were heard and lamented by the Margate and Ramsgate pilots, who wished, but dared not attempt to weather the tremendous gale.

It was near four in the morning, and day-light had just begun to tinge the Heavens with a greyish hue, when the men, exhausted by working at the pump, gave up the toilsome duty, and recommended themselves to their God. The sea gained very rapidly, and Alfred, less faint-hearted than the generality of his comrades, walked the deck, disheartened but not unmanned by fear. By the help of a glass, he descried a boat, in which were a midshipman, and four sailors making towards them; but scarcely had he time to announce the salutary news, ere the vessel shipped on the other sea, which in a moment overpowered her. The boat was already launched, and Alfred, with two of his shipmates, were the only persons who ventured to board her. They were speedily conveyed to Ramsgate, where they found they were indebted for their preservation to Captain Bertie, who commanded the cutter; and who, at a distance seeing the vessel in distress, had ordered that his ship should go to, until the miserable sufferers were landed on the nearest shore.

It happened that the two sailors, who Alfred, escaped the wreck, had been in Ramsgate, who kindly received them.

submitted to their necessities, and showed those compassionate civilities to Alfred, which their joint sufferings could not but naturally inspire. But he was impatient to make his way to London and to enquire after his friends.

Observing the situation of his companions, and the poverty of their relations, he would not hurt their feelings by refusing any little assistance they might have offered him, and therefore quitted Ramsgate a day or two before the time proposed for his departure. There was a strong natural delicacy in the mind of Alfred, which his sufferings had rather polished than blunted, and with a palpitating heart he left Ramsgate, compelled once more to resume the character of a Beggar-Boy, and thus make his progress towards the capital.

On the road he was not very importunate; for little would satisfy the wants of Alfred, and he did not beg for begging's sake. What he had experienced in his short sojourn in this world, filled his mind with salutary reflections—and he arrived in London, though not a better, yet a wiser young man than when he left it.

His first care was to go to Mr. Norton's house, but he had the mortification of hearing that he had been dead near a twelvemonth—that his widow, who was already married again, had removed to another county—and that her eldest son, the juvenile friend and favorite of Alfred, was so incensed at the choice she had made, that he had left her, and was

gone as an articled clerk to an attorney in the west of England.

He next went to Mrs. Smith, whom he found well, save that she was grown very infirm. She lived in the vicinity of the house which she formerly rented, but had for a length of time declined business. She related to him the particulars of the robbery, and after rummaging over all her boxes and drawers, at length found the letter which Martha had left with her, for him. But Mrs. Smith had not since heard of her, and the letter simply contained an account of the loss of her money—and that she, despairing of ever more seeing her darling child, and having lost Gerald, had determined on returning to a beggar's life.

This communication wrung the heart of Alfred, and the disappointment he experienced, in not being able to obtain further intelligence of Martha was as severe as that which the feeling mind alone can prove, on having its fondest hopes destroyed. He instantly resolved on going to Norwood, to find if there was any possibility of tracing Martha; but, Mrs. Smith having a garret unoccupied, he accepted her invitation, for the night, and the next morning, set out on his walk, with a large oaken stick, and in apparel as humble as his situation.

He walked very fast, and was proceeding down the lane, beyond Kennington, when he was alarmed by the screams of a female voice, at some little distance. Running to the spot, he perceived a gig, by the side of which stood

lady and two men, one of whom was holding the horse, while the other was rifling her pockets, and insulting her by the most dreadful imprecations. Alfred, with no other weapon than his stick, levelled a blow at the head of the plunderer, who in a moment sunk on the ground. The other took to flight, and the lady, whose acknowledgments to her deliverer were unbounded, requested that he would accompany her in the gig to the forest, which he readily accepted. They left the plunderer in a state of insensibility, deeming that a sufficient punishment, as the lady was by no means inclined to become his public prosecutrix.

On their way, the lady gave Alfred to understand, that she was going to the forest for the purpose of having her fortune told by gypsies, and Alfred fervently prayed that among them he might discover his mother.

They drove to the Horns public house, where she ordered a comfortable dinner, and while it was preparing, made every enquiry of the people of the house respecting the fortunetelling tribe; but learned, to her mortification, that they had left Norwood for the winter, seldom visiting it at that season, except on Sundays. The lady expressed much regret, and finding that her purpose was frustrated, requested of Alfred to see her home, which he could not with propriety decline, although it was his wish to search the forest and its vicinity for the purpose of obtaining tidings of Martha. She, however, expressed herself so anx-

and the lady, finding that Alfred was better educated and informed than his appearance had indicated, related to him, out disguise, the object of her morning excursion; which was merely to become acquainted with the customs and the manners of the gypsies, having occasion to describe them in a book she was then writing. Alfred, on return, became equally communicative, and told her enough of his story, to convince her that he knew all about them. He gave her, therefore, all the intelligence worth knowing which yet amounted to but little; and, in a short time, they arrived at a genteel-looking house, in Hart-Street, Bloomsbury. The door was quickly opened by a foot-boy, whom the lady directed to take home the gig, but not to send in the maid, that she might eat her supper.

She introduced Alfred into a neat parlour, and then called out to Tom, not to hurry old Mary. 'She is a poor, good old creature, as ever lived,' said she to Alfred; 'but lame and very slow; yet I cannot find in my heart

with her? They sat down by a comfortable fire, and the lady desiring Alfred to consider himself at home, as if he had not a lodging near, she could accommodate him with a bed; sat down to her writing-desk, and began looking over some manuscripts that lay on the table.

A few minutes afterwards, the old creature hobbled in, tying on a clean white apron, and respectfully going up to her lady. Scarcely had she spoken the first word, when Alfred, violently agitated, hastily arose, and exclaimed, 'O, my mother! my mother!' for it was indeed Martha who appeared before him!

CHAPTER XXXII.

Curiosity and Enquiry.

MARTHA gave a vacant stare, which recognised Alfred, and immediately sunk senseless on the floor. All that humanity and kindness could suggest to the mind of Mrs. Howard, were practised by that amiable woman, who, in her anxious sollicitude for Martha, appeared more like her friend than her mistress. Martha was at length roused from her stupor, and a flood of tears relieved her tortured bosom, as she surveyed the manly form, the polished manner, and the shabby dress of Alfred. She would have asked him in one breath ten

though frustrated in its primary aim, terminated so happily, as to convince her, from apparent evil, real good is frequentlytracted—and she congratulated the meeting of two human beings whom she ready cherished, while her tearful eyes claimed the feelings of her heart, and her mulous voice bespoke the triumph of sensibility.

Martha requested permission of Mrs. Elard that Alfred might go with her into kitchen, which was accordingly granted; the benevolent hostess, throwing aside her ruminated at leisure on the events of the day. They were such as gave comfort to her heart, for she reflected on the benignity with which providence had been pleased to endow her, and from which she now derived such satisfaction. Her supper ended, she dismissed Martha and her young charge to bed, and enjoyed that rest in her own, which none but the virtuous can experience.

communications, which it was natural to suppose would be the result of their first private intercourse. Many were the tears that dropped over the furrowed cheek of Martha, while she listened to the plaintive relation of the young Alfred's sufferings, and many were the stifled sighs that rent *his* bosom, while he listened to *her* accumulated sorrows.

When breakfast was over, Mrs. Howard desired the private attendance of Martha, and informed her, that during the greatest part of the night, she had been meditating on Alfred's present and future state. She grieved, she said, that she had not an eligible offer to make him; but, assured Martha, 'That she would, in the course of a few days, see her relation, Admiral M'Bride, to whom she would recommend him, in the strongest terms, for a situation on board his ship, if possible; or, if that could not be effected, at least in a ship under the command of one of the admiral's friends.'

Martha hung down her head, but made no answer.

Mrs. Howard, conjecturing that Martha had no other idea beyond that of retaining him near herself, rang the bell, which was answered by Tom, and desired that Alfred would attend her. She was struck by his prepossessing appearance, which being invigorated by those wholesome balsams to the mind diseased, sleep, and composure of mind, had acquired a degree of superiority over that of the preceding day,

which still operated more powerfully in his favour.

Mrs. Howard questioned him on the subject of his inclinations relative to his future destination. Alfred turned his eyes on Martha, who immediately conjecturing that Mrs. Howard supposed him brought up to the sea, undeceived that lady, by assuring her, that he was an apprentice to Mr. Norton, a school-master, at the time he was impressed, and rudely transported to Jamaica. Alfred then expatiated on every particular that occurred to him on that island—his subsequent imprisonment at Calais, and ill-fated return to England—his motive for going to Norwood—when, as he elegantly expressed himself, he was fortunate enough to render her the trifling service, for which he was already so largely overpaid—that the last drop of his blood would prove but a small recompense, were it now shed in her defence.

Mrs. Howard, after expressing by tears her sense of Alfred's gratitude, gave him leave to retire; and dispatched Tom for her taylor, who had her instructions to provide him with a suit of clothes, which were promised on the following evening. She likewise purchased him every other article of dress—and the same day informed him, that she would engage to employ him in her own house for a month, in which time she thought it more than probable that something better might turn up to his advantage.

The day passed on with satisfaction to

secret, and the next morning, at the hour when Martha, late Mary, in the house of Mrs. Howard, was accustomed to wait upon her mistress, and to consult with her on the subject of dinner, she requested with much formality and solemnity, that she might have an hour's audience, having, she said, matters of weight and moment, which she wished to communicate to her alone. Mrs. Howard, with a smile of approbation, granted her request—and having seated Alfred at her desk, retired to her own apartment, where she shortly after summoned Martha to divulge the secret, which to her seemed of so much importance.

After a long preface, accompanied by many courtesies and apologies, Martha related to Mrs. Howard the whole of Alfred's history—and in order to obviate any suspicion as to her veracity, produced the picture of Admiral Sydney, which not even her deepest distress had ever been able to prevail on her to part with.

The liberal heart of Mrs. Howard overflowed with the most tender pity, while she listened to the sad recital of the young Alfred's wrongs, and Martha's tried attachment to him. She promised that both should find in her a friend, and that her exertions should not be wanting to help them to a better.

Mrs. Howard remembered that she had frequently heard Admiral M'Bride mention Admiral Sydney, as a brave officer, an excellent man, and one of his oldest friends—but said nothing of the latter circumstance to Martha,

whom she dismissed the chamber in the most gracious, signifying only that she would not be unmindful of the interests of Alfred. It became from this moment, the subject nearest to the heart of Mrs. Howard, to proceed in the enquiries she determined to make after the family of Admiral Sydney. The season had scarcely begun to fill for the winter, and few of her acquaintance were yet arrived in it. Forbidding, therefore Alfred all servile offices, she resolved to retain him in his present capacity of her amanuensis, until time and opportunity should afford her the means of gaining that knowledge, which was now become essential to her own peace.

Mrs. Howard was so much engaged in her reflections on this new subject, which wholly occupied her ardent mind, that she scarcely ever pursued her morning's walk, to which she had long been accustomed, or derived pleasure from any relaxation of business, as she was formerly wont to do. Many were the private consultations held between herself and Martha—the purport of which was, to consider whether it would be proper or improper, to reveal to Alfred his own history. The natural impatience and candour of Mrs. Howard's mind prompted her to surprize him with an elucidation of the mysteries of his life—but the fear Martha thought otherwise—and it was at length agreed between them, that there would be a species of cruelty in flattering his hopes until they had some certain ground to go upon that would promise their realization.

Mrs. Howard was true to her promise. In less than a fortnight, Admiral M'Bride returned to his house in Harley-street, and two days did not pass ere her card was left at his door, with a particular message to the porter, expressive of her wish to see him. It was answered the next morning by a visit from the admiral, to whom she fully related the foregoing events, and who having lately heard that Miss Sydney was in existence, wished to consult with her, before he gave any decided opinion on the claims of him who now stood forward as her nephew.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Secrets of the Prison-House.

BUT though Admiral M'Bride was fully convinced that Miss Sydney was still living, yet he had not the most distant idea where to look for, or enquire after her. She had some years since, been in habits of intimacy with many of his acquaintance—but she was now dead to the world, and consequently forgotten by it. In some obscure dwelling, he thought it probable that she lingered out a miserable existence—but whether on the continent or in England, it was impossible for him to surmise.

In pursuance, however, of Mrs. Howard's

wishes, he determined to explore every avenue that might lead to a discovery—and for that purpose, chiefly addressed himself on the subject to the officers of the navy whom he met—who, some from regard for the deceased admiral, and others from esteem for the living one, became particular in their enquiries.—About three months had expired, and Alfred and Martha still retained their comfortable situations in the house of Mrs. Howard, when Admiral M'Bride received a card of invitation to make one of a party, that was to dine at the Bedford on the following Thursday.—The note was written by Captain Robertson, one of the gentlemen whom he had requested to make enquiries after Miss Sydney. The party consisted of two admirals, and five post-captains—all old and respectable officers, who had signalized themselves in the service of their country. As soon as dinner was over, and 'success to the British arms,' had gone round, Captain Robertson proposed, that they should among themselves raise a subscription towards relieving the necessities of a gentleman in distress, the sister of the late Admiral Sydney, whom they must all remember, and who being remembered, must still be revered. This delicate, but effectual mode which Captain Robertson had adopted, was congenial to the feelings of Admiral M'Bride, who looked, but could not express his acknowledgements.

He was anxious to hasten to Mrs. Howard,

with the joyful tidings of his having thus far succeeded—but first endeavoured to obtain from Captain Robertson, every particular of Miss Sydney's situation. The captain was meanwhile engaged in receiving the money, and taking down the amount of the sums and names of the subscribers, who varied but according to their purses, each having equally the appearance of wishing to extend beyond their means, the service they at that moment, so willingly tendered.

Admiral M'Bride, who took a *visible* interest in the transaction, was unwilling to set an example of prodigality, that might be detrimental to the junior officers present; he therefore, when called upon, took only five guineas from his purse, and learned from Capt. Robertson, that Miss Sydney was at that time detained a prisoner in the King's Bench, where she had already passed more than three long years, and that she entertained no hope of a release, until an act of insolvency should set the captives free in spite of their merciless creditors.

He immediately proposed to meet Captain Robertson, early the next morning at the British coffee-house; and that from thence they should proceed to that dreary receptacle, wherein vice and virtue are alike confounded.

Both gentlemen were true to the appointed hour. They were equally unknown to Miss Sydney, and had she presided over her late mansion in Grosvenor-Square, they would not

have presumed to knock at her door, without the necessary etiquette of introduction. But it is the prerogative of poverty, not only to humiliate those who smart under its lash, but likewise to extend its humiliation to the friends who pity it. The worthy Admiral M'Bride, who possessed one of the most feeling hearts in the world, would have thought that his carriage was degraded by stopping at the door of a prison—yet he did not think *himself* so, and proceeded with Captain Robertson, in an humble hack to the lobby of the King's Bench prison, where they learned that Miss Sydney lodged at 6 in 5, and that the crier, whom they would find at the gate, would conduct them thither. The expression of 6 in 5, was enigmatical to our two gallant sons of Neptune, who, however, proceeded in their course and finding their interpreter, the crier, were conducted to the apartment of Miss Sydney. In a wretched room of small dimensions, which contained a press-bed, two mutilated chairs, and a broken table, sat the late elegant, late fashionable Miss Sydney. She arose on their entrance, and in a mournful voice, requested to know what were their commands with her?

The dismal solitude in which they found her, the dejection of her looks and those looks, bearing so strong a resemblance to the late worthy admiral, impressed them with a sort of reverential awe for sorrow struggling against adversity. Admiral M'Bride made a pretence for leaving the room a few minutes; and Cap-

Captain Robertson felt more as if he was going to solicit a favor, than to confer one. Such is the power of fallen dignity, over susceptible minds! They feel for, and relieve those, whose abject state has rendered them callous to suffering; but, for those who have enjoyed splendid days, and are sunk, whether from depravity or misfortune, into the dark abyss of calamity, there is a sensation of respect, intermingled with terror, lest the same fate should, at one time or other, become their own!

Captain Robertson, having delivered to Miss Sydney the liberal contributions of himself and his friends, which brought into her eyes tears of gratitude, the admiral returned; when Captain Robertson said to her, 'This, madam, is Admiral M'Bride, who was well known to your late brother, and is particularly interested about his family.'

The admiral observed, that his old friend had a daughter, and, 'It is respecting her, madam, that I am solicited to enquire.'

'Poor Louisa!' cried Miss Sydney; 'I am sorry that I can give you no information; I only know that, whatever calamities she has undergone, or is now suffering, I am the wretched author of them all. My example, and my persuasions, plunged her in such distress, as she ought never to have felt. But the report which prevailed, and which you probably have heard, of her absconding with a servant, was a falsehood fabricated by myself,

to answer some pecuniary purposes of mine. I take shame to myself, that I was, however, the cause of her really and suddenly abandoning herself; and, before it was in my power to enquire after her situation, I was as indirectly compelled to quit my own. The storm of adversity, the clouds of which I must confess to have raised myself, was just bursting over my head. To avoid it, I collected all I could of my effects and debts of honor, and flew to Paris. I recollected that Madame de Roche, who had been formerly one of my intimates in London, had given me repeated invitations to visit her, should chance ever conduct me into her country. I was not, then, aware how soon I should become one of those wanderers, whose unforeseen misfortunes would drag from native England, to seek, in a foreign clime, that peace which one would, more naturally, expect to find at home. I was received by Madame de Roche, with the ease of affability, and the warmth of friendship. She lavished on me protestations of sincere regard, and indeed, in the end, did not deceive me. She drew from me, by degrees, a confidence, which I had resolved to lock up as a sacred deposit within my own breast.

Her house, her purse, all advantages were proffered by her, nor did I abuse the trust. Madame de Roche was young, fascinating, and generous in the extreme. She had a good house, a plentiful table, and a numerous circle of acquaintance. She was frivolous, not a

plished—good-natured, not intelligent—ty was her ruling passion ; and it was indeed by a doting husband, who had bestowed handsome pension on her penniless mother, purchased her person at the expence of his t.

Monsieur de Roche was commandant of small town of Arras, in Picardy. His lady times accompanied him thither, but passed greatest part of her time in Paris, where she perfectly the *ton* ; and became in proportion indifferent to the duties of a domestic life. created her counsel in my then precarious situation ; she gave it me with cheerfulness, recommended to me to marry the young scour, her brother, who would be enchanted he said, by an alliance with an Englishman of quality ; and who, with a good fortune, inherited every personal and mental accomplishment.

On the same evening after this conversation, we went into Madame de Roche's box at the opera, where I was soon after accosted by a very elegant young man, introduced to me as a casual acquaintance, by Madame de Roche. Their reciprocal smiles, however, soon convinced me, that he was either a favoured lover, or her brother. I had no cause to apprehend the former ; since, from the time I had been a resident in her house, she had appeared to me firmly attached to her husband. I therefore, concluded the gentleman to be her brother, but was not certain.

till our return to her house, when she willingly acknowledged, that he was the gentleman whom she had recommended to me in the morning. Conceiving, from my sister's representation, that his property was considerable, and feeling as I did, the want of a protector, I was not long in acceding to his proposals, and we were married. In a few months afterwards, he was seized with the small-pox, and I had speedily to regret the loss of the count, and being left with the small pittance of eighty pounds a year; for, whatever were his circumstances when living, I found that was all I could derive from his death.

‘ Upon enquiry among some English people of distinction in Paris I found, that my name had not been heard of—I therefore, deemed it right to return to England, thinking it probable, in case of Louisa's death, that the count's property would devolve to me. Reassuming my family name, I came to London, and went afterwards to my brother's house in the country, which I found in possession of a man, Le Brun, against whose claims it was in vain to contend—and of my niece I obtained such things whatever.

‘ I determined therefore to return to France directly, after I had privately visited my friends in London, on whose fidelity I could rely. It so happened, however, that I was accidentally seen by Brilliant, my jeweller, to whom I was considerably indebted. He conducted me to the house of a friend, where I

remain a few days. I was so ill, that it was impossible for me to go farther, and I was confined to the mansion of the Count, where I have existed on the annuity I received, as the widow of the Count Bellacour, which was very irregularly paid, and, in consequence of some late political transactions in Paris, or the faithlessness of my agents, is now totally lost. In this deplorable state, I was advised, as the sister of Admiral Sydney, to appeal to the humanity of his brother officers, and it is impossible to express my gratitude for the instance I have just now received of their kind benevolence.

The gentlemen, after assuring Miss Sydney, that they would be happy in rendering her further services, withdrew, and the admiral immediately repaired to Mrs. Howard, to whom he related what had passed, which afforded so little satisfaction, and threw so little light on the story of Alfred, that Martha was called up, and questioned by the admiral, as to all the particulars of the subject. But from her, they could learn no more than what they were already acquainted with: she knew nothing of Le Brun, or of Mr. Johnstone, the father of Alfred. She circumstantially repeated to the admiral, what he in effect, had heard from Mrs. Howard, and concluded by shewing him the picture of Admiral Sydney, which Mrs. Johnstone had given her to keep as a testimony of her services. Admiral M'Bride, was struck with the strong resemblance of his late friend: he then

fed over it a minute, then dropped a tear upon it ; and returning it to Martha, exclaimed, " He was an honor to the navy ; a brave fellow, and a good man ; and by G——, no *real* descendant of his shall want a protector while I live !"

After some further conversation with Mrs. Howard, he left her, with an assurance that he would leave no means untried, of sifting this affair to the bottom.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

New Scenes—New Emotions.

WHILE these good friends were thus interesting themselves in the concerns of Alfred, that young man found himself comfortable and happy in the asylum and employment afforded him by Mrs. Howard ; and, as Martha was the only person for whom he felt any tender solicitude, it was easy to perceive the effect these concurring circumstances produced. He became equally attentive to the improvement of his person and his mind ; and it was easy to discern, that he was not calculated for the menial, or servile offices of life :

" For, Nature, driven out with proud disdain,

" All-powerful goddess ! will return again."

He took great delight in his employment, and justly appreciated the merits of Mrs. How-

...the composition. The morning after the
admiral had seen Martha Alfred, in the
city of amanuensis, was copying the description
of a young lady; endowed with all the graces
of mind and of person: the description was
very minute; as it specified, not only her features,
but her dress. It struck him forcibly,
and impressed him with sensations he had never
felt before. He copied and re-copied it
with singular pleasure. Mrs Howard was going
to pay a morning visit. In the midst of his
reflections on this subject, a carriage came
up to the door, and a young lady was
shewn into the parlour, where he was
writing, so exactly corresponding in person
and dress to the description he so much admired,
that he viewed her with a peculiar degree
of agitation, which rendered him almost inca-
pable of offering her a chair, and performing
the civilities customary on such occasions. His
emotion would have been visible to any one
who had at all noticed him; but the young
lady, requesting she might not interrupt him,
sat down herself, and took up a book.

Alfred pursued his business, but with so
much trepidation, that the lines his pen traced
denoted the palpitations of his heart. He could
not help frequently directing his eyes towards
her, and as frequently blushed. An hour be-
fore, he had been charmed with a beautiful
vision of virtue on paper. He was now en-
amoured with that virtue, personified, to
which he gazed with admiration. It is needless
to say, that he felt, and felt ardently.

the first emotions of the noblest passion of the human heart.

Whilst this silent scene was passing, Martha came into the room to enquire whether the young lady wished for any refreshment, which she declined—‘Do you think, Mary,’ said she, ‘that my mamma will return soon?’ Martha answered in the affirmative, and quitted the room.

‘Are you, then, may I presume to ask,’ said Alfred, ‘Miss Howard?’

‘I am—and I return home unexpectedly, from a long visit in the country.’

Alfred was charmed with the tones of her voice. After the pause of a few minutes, he arose, and with an air of great diffidence, approached her, saying, ‘I believe, I know where Mrs. Howard is—permit me to step to inform her of your arrival.’ There was a grace in his manner, which induced her also to rise, and with a slight courtesy, to request she might not interrupt him. Their eyes met—he had never seen anything so lovely. They resumed their places; Miss Howard wondering who this person could be, thus seated at her mother’s desk, and at the same time involuntarily confessed, that there was something prepossessing in the modesty of his manner, and the propriety of his deportment.

Mrs. Howard now returned home, greatly rejoiced at finding her Eliza. Alfred withdrew, and expressed to Martha his admiration of the young lady. ‘Aye,’ said Martha, ‘she

ing enough. — 'It is indeed, — and how beautiful she is! — I am sure,' answered Martha, 'she is so very good, that one forgets her beauty.' — 'With so much excellence is lost,' replied, 'I suppose she has many admirers.' — 'Admirers!' exclaimed Martha. — 'In my conscience, I believe we have half the fine gentlemen in London, entreating for her.'

Alfred sighed.

'But,' continued Martha, 'her mamma is so proud among these high folks, though she is so affable to us, and she requires in a husband for miss, so many great qualities, which I find are not very common among great folks, that I don't think miss is likely to have a husband in a hurry.'

Alfred felt his mind relieved.

In the course of the morning, Mrs. Howard related to her daughter the extraordinary history of Alfred—the particular service he had rendered her on her way to Norwood—the interest she took in his concerns—and the employment she had given him.

To all this Eliza listened with profound attention. 'Indeed, mamma,' said she, 'I feel a sense of gratitude for the providential service of this young man—perhaps he saved your life. But if he be really the grandson of Admiral Sydney'—

'I know what you would infer, child,' Mrs. Howard said, interrupting her daughter.

ought not to be in my kitchen ; nor should he, did I not consider that he is ignorant of all these circumstances, and that, considering Mary as his mother, he is of course happy at *her* table. But you will observe, my dear, that we are not certain that he *is* the grandson of Admiral Sydney.'

This conversation was scarcely ended, when a message was received from Admiral M'Bride, requesting the favour of seeing Mrs. Howard the next morning, and an answer was returned, that she would attend him, which she did accordingly.

During Mrs. Howard's absence, Alfred was seated at his desk, anxiously wishing the young lady might come into the room. Two hours passed, which he conceived to be as solitary as he had ever known ; his mind was absorbed in reflection—and for the first time, he envied those who could command riches. In the midst of his dreary reveries, miss Howard entered. She requested that she might not disturb him, as she only wanted a volume of Shakespeare. He entreated to know which volume, rising to reach it for her—'that,' she said, 'which contains Romeo and Juliet.'

'Do you, then, may I ask, prefer tragedy ?'

'The mournful story of Romeo and Juliet has always interested me.'

'I am less charmed with the story,' said Alfred, with great modesty ; 'but the sentiments and description with which the poet has adorned it, form its chief recommendation to me.'

"I will pray, Sir, what you please," said Alfred, bowing. "I have been very much interested in the garden scene, by all means," said Mrs. Howard, blushing; and, turning to Alfred, said, "But I suppose you prefer poetry, and the more serious sciences to works of amusement." "Indeed, madam, I have had little opportunity of making myself so well acquainted with literature as I could have wished." "You will, perhaps, soon have an opportunity of indulging your taste."

Alfred, bowing, replied, "I have an opportunity, by copying the manuscripts of my excellent benefactress, Mrs. Howard."

"But, possibly, providence may order other means for gratifying your wishes," for, as Capella says, "we all know what we are, but we know not what we may be; and you must live in hope."

His conversation, which promised to be very pleasant to Alfred, was interrupted by the return of Mrs. Howard, who had learned from Admiral M'Bride, that resolving to make himself personally master of the subject respecting the will of Admiral Byng, he had been to Doctor's Commons, in order to search for the will of Admiral Byng, where, however it was not to be found. He afterwards again called upon Miss Sydenham to enquire what she understood to be the claim of Le Brun on the property of her brother. That lady could give him no decisive information; she said, that she had not seen Le Brun.

who was not in the country at the time she went thither—but she had seen his agent, who assured her, that Mr. Le Brun held the admiral's estates under his will, which she understood to be made in his favour, in consequence of Le Brun having rendered her brother some singular services when he was abroad. She acknowledged, that she feared her own conduct, and that of her niece, had induced the admiral to make his will in the heat of resentment, or, probably, might have been prevailed upon by some undue influence, thus to deprive his own and only child, and his sister of their natural rights.

The admiral assured Mrs. Howard, that he knew his friend too well, to think him capable of any species of injustice, especially to his own family—and that if he had been unduly prevailed upon to make any will, there would be no difficulty in having it set aside.

In this state of uncertainty, the admiral had determined to take a journey to his friend's seat, and personally to see Le Brun. And, having been impressed with a favorable opinion of Alfred, and pleased with Mrs. Howard's representation of his manners and conversation the admiral requested that he might accompany him, as a companion on the road. Alfred being yet completely ignorant of every circumstance respecting his own concerns; and, it was intended, that he should remain so, till something decisive should have transpired.

What had passed between the admiral and

which he expressed, her words on Alfred's part, with a sincerity which pleased her more than attributed Eliza's feelings to her, gave her philanthropy; feelings, which, however, were tinged in a sentiment more tender, with the nature and extent of which Eliza was, heretofore, to a great degree, ignorant; for, though the young lady had abundance of lovers, yet none of them had the good fortune to inspire her with a passion.

Which all can feign, but few can feel.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A Journey and its Occurrences.

THE admiral, taking his own carriage, and accompanied by Alfred, soon after commenced his journey. The kind manner in which he expressed himself encouraged Alfred to converse with freedom, and rendered the road, and the passing objects doubly pleasant. It was a journey of two days. Among other subjects of conversation, the admiral introduced the navy—“And so, Mr. Johnstone,” said he, “your adventures at sea have determined you not to be a sailor—you don’t like the service?”

“Sir,” answered Alfred, “I am scarcely able to judge whether I like the service or not.”

the manner in which I was compelled to go into it, may naturally have prejudiced me against it—and I cannot help thinking, Sir, that it is a mode highly disgraceful to the service.'

'I will not take upon me,' replied the admiral, 'to defend the practice of impressing—though I think it may be in some degree justified by the pressure of times and circumstances—but it was certainly intended that none but *seamen* should be impressed—they form a part, and a very material part of the defence of the country, and it is their duty to stand forth in the hour of danger. If they neglect or refuse to do this, I see no cruelty in compelling them to perform their duty. Indeed, the service of the country requires too much compulsion—the supplies, and the taxes necessary to pay those who personally expose themselves, and who may be called the active servants of the state, would, I fear, fall very short, were there no compulsory power to enforce the payment. But it is the abuse of power, against which we all complain, and at which human nature recoils—and doubtless, many acts of cruelty result from the impress service, which every one must execrate, and renders the service diabolical in the eyes of the public in general. All instances similar to your own, ought to be redressed; and the only imperfection of which I complain, as a professional man, is, that no officer is appointed to enquire into the circumstances of all those who may com-

of having their civil liberties violated.'—

'Indeed, Sir,' objected Alfred; 'I have never been used to such a life of wandering on the earth, that I know not why, except being torn from my friends, I should feel any sympathy to wandering on the deep.'

'Nay,' replied the admiral, 'I, by no means, wish to influence your feelings: I glory in the service of my country, and the sea is my element; but, providence may ordain the land to be yours. Under the patronage and instructions of Mrs. Howard, I am sure you will do your duty *every where*.'

Alfred, with tears of gratitude, assured the admiral he would do so.

Towards the evening of the first day, the carriage was stopped by a highwayman, who, coming to that side where the admiral sat, was in the act of presenting a pistol, when, instead of firing, he received the fire of the admiral, and instantly dropped from his horse. Alfred, with the assistance of the postillion, by direction of the admiral, put the wounded man into the carriage, that he might be conveyed to the next village, which they observed at a small distance. He was taken to a public house, and a surgeon was sent for, who declared the wound to be mortal. After he had done what he thought proper, the admiral desired to be left alone with the highwayman, to whom he expressed his sorrow for being the cause of his death.

“But I am not the man who would
live in the knowledge of his wife’s
dishonour, and whom she, even
should one day die, would
share in a dishonourable death. I depend
much on the contingency of my wife’s
death, though I treated her with such harshness
in the flesh, even while she was pregnant
with you, and I never afterwards heard of her.
My affairs were embarrassed, my estate
mortgaged, and subsequent disappointments
drove me to desperation. I tried to
amuse myself, by means which only plunged me
deeper—but why do I mention these things?
You see what I am—unfit to live, and
fit to die!”

The admiral endeavoured to console him.
“I should die content,” he said, with great
civility, for death was making quick work
of him. “I should die content, did I but know
of my wife—poor Louisa Sydney?”
“Sydney!” cried the admiral, “the
daughter of Admiral Sydney?—the
name is Johnstone.”

“He had just power enough to utter
the name!”

“Good God!” said the admiral, “
reason!”

The dying man was in such agony
of mind, that he endeavoured in vain
to speak, he gave a sort of convulsive scream,
and once a sort of wild joy and
terror, and with that scream he died.

The feelings of the admiral were strongly touched, and he stood some minutes, irresolute what to do; at length, he resolved not to acquaint Alfred that this was his father, but he would not omit the opportunity of his deriving some benefit from the transaction, and, wished him to see the man to whom he owed his being, that he might, at some future time, inform him of these interesting, though painful particulars.

He called in Alfred.

‘Young man,’ said the admiral, ‘you have seen what vice and folly end in.’

Alfred started, and trembled as he looked on the lifeless body.

‘This man,’ continued the admiral, ‘has left a son—and that son I know.’

‘Indeed, Sir!’

‘Aye, indeed, and a good boy he is—and I will have this body decently buried for that boy’s sake.’

‘And who is he, Sir?’ said Alfred.

‘I cannot talk about him now,’ answered the admiral; ‘but we will have this deluded man put into the ground, and drop a tear over him. We must remember,’ added he, ‘that we are all frail barks, tossed on the broad ocean of life, by the winds of passion, and it is not every one can steer clear of rocks and quicksands; so we must have charity for one another. It was a moot point whether the next coffin should have been made for this man or for me. I have killed him—(I am sorry for it)’

A a

—in which the admiral had the
the intention to prolong the on
and misery. But he is abandoned
—and may the Great Pilot find
room in a better harbour !

All this time Alfred hung peacefully
body, little imagining it was that of
The admiral then gave directions
funeral, and the next evening they
remains interred in the village church
on the following morning, pursued
ney.

It was late in the evening when they
ed at the village of Auburn ; enquiring
fore, at the small inn, if Mr. Le Brun
there, and being answered in the affirmative,
the admiral contented himself with before
the best supper the house could provide
the most decent beds ; he retired early to
chamber, to ruminate at leisure on the
of his commission ; but found that his
banishing every pleasing idea, reverted
the fatal catastrophe of the morning.

The feelings of Alfred were in unison
his own. Without any particular
lamenting the fate of the robber, he
himself awed into pity, by a spectacle
rrible as that which the dying and
sinner exhibited. He shuddered, when
flected on the short passage from life
and found that the last look of the
man had penetrated his soul with
which no time would ever be able to

feature was engraved in characters indelible on his mind; and the gloom of night betrayed him watching with haggard countenance over the slumber of Alfred, which his solitary presence had broken. It was a night extended from melancholy to horror.—A cold wind and rain had preceded the storm, which now raged with violence; the windows and door of Alfred's chamber shook with tremendous noise; nothing was still around him, but human nature, which seemed to be locked in the arms of sleep, in order to render more terrific the flitting shadows of his own imagination.

Towards morning, he arose and dressed himself, but no one in the house was stirring; he knocked at the admiral's door, and was consoled by the well-known *hem* that issued from within, and the grey twilight which encircled him, that he might yet endeavour for a few hours, to court that repose, which the night had denied him. He lay down on his bed, and when, hearing the people of the house in motion, afterwards descended, he was amazed to find that the admiral had been gone out more than two hours, leaving for him a message, that he should breakfast, and expect his return at one or two o'clock.

Alfred, unaccustomed to mystery of any kind, and unprepared to find it in Admiral Bride, who had hitherto appeared to hold every species of it in contempt; recollecting his wife, that he was informed by him on the

road, that some trifling business with the attorney would not detain him more than an hour. At Auburn, began to ruminate on the present enigmatical conduct of the admiral, and conjectured that something was at the bottom of the journey which it was impossible for him to comprehend. Though his nature revolted at every thing prying and inquisitive, yet he could not forbear reflecting at this moment, on several very mysterious insinuations, which had been thrown out to him by Miss Howard, who had always appeared fearful of saying too much, while she still signified that she had said too little. To this was to be added, many long and private conferences which Mrs. Howard had lately held with Martha, sometimes alone, and sometimes in presence of the admiral, together with numberless little circumstances which he could not avoid perceiving, and which united, excited a degree of anxiety in his mind hitherto unknown to him.

It was near four o'clock in the afternoon when, to the great satisfaction of Alfred, the admiral returned, in company with a venerable gentleman, whom he arose to receive, to whom he supposed to be the attorney already alluded to.

'Mr. Johnstone,' said the admiral, 'have you any recollection whether you ever met this gentleman before?'

Alfred replied in the negative.

'Look at me young man,' said the attorney, 'did you never visit Auburn until the 1st of

Alfred did not remember that he had.

The stranger continued.

'The day is fine, and with the admiral's permission, I will, while dinner is preparing, show you a spot, which I think it possible you may remember.'

Alfred looked at the admiral, who, by a nod, expressed his approbation.

The admiral threw himself on a chair, and seemed lost in reflection. The stranger and Alfred walked out.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

An Useful Interview.

AS it had from the first, been the admiral's determination that Alfred should remain ignorant of the object of the present journey, in case it should prove fruitless of any good to that young man, he had arisen purposely to go by himself to Sydney-Grove, and make his enquiries. To that favorite seat of his old friend he, therefore, went. He knocked loudly at the hall-door; but all was silent, and he began to think that the inhabitants had got the 'lazy trick of lying abed in the morning.' He more than once renewed his application to the rapper, and, at length, a man appeared at the door. He seemed to be more of a hind,

A a a

“I have seen the garden, that is all,”

“And,” said the admiral, “is that
Mr. Le Brun?”

“No, Sir.”

“What! does not he live here?”

“No, Sir.”

“Is there another Sydney-Grove, then?”

“No, Sir.”

“Then whom does this house belong to?”

“Why, truly, Sir, that’s a hard matter
to say; for, here be sometimes one family,
and sometimes another.”

“Well, and have you not heard of Mr.
Le Brun among them?”

“O lack! aye, to be sure—but then, do
you see, he’s dead.”

“Dead!”

“O yes, died two year agoe.”

“And whom does this house *now* belong
to?”

“Why, yesterday it belonged to Captain
Roberts—but to-day, I believe it belongs to
Mr. Lucas, the clergyman.”

“And where is *he*?”

“He! O, he’s at the curate’s cottage,
at a great distance from this—and I wonder how
his folks be’nt come before now. O, yonder is Mr. Lucas himself! Don’t you see
yonder behind those trees, a stately-looking
man in black, walking slowly this way?”

“He?”

“The admiral waited for no further information.”

tion from this quaint house-keeper, but he wanted to meet Mr. Lucas, to whom he apologized for thus accosting him.

‘My worthy friend, Admiral Sydney, has long since paid the debt of nature; but I wished to see his place, and to make some enquiries respecting his family.’

‘May I ask,’ said Mr. Lucas, ‘with whom I have the honor of conversing?’

The admiral informed him.

‘I am extremely gratified,’ said Mr. Lucas ‘in having the felicity of seeing so brave and able a defender of his king and country. Let me entreat your company to my cottage. I hope you will breakfast with me; and I will give you any information you may require, respecting our late dear friend, Admiral Sydney, who was my chief benefactor, and my best friend.’

‘Your civilities, Sir,’ replied the admiral, ‘are peculiarly obliging, and I accept them with great pleasure.’

They returned to the curate’s cottage, which the reader will recollect, and which had, since Mr. Lucas’s residence in it, received many additional charms, both from art and nature. The admiral was delighted with the scenery around him. They were welcomed by Mrs. Neville, who was on a visit to her father. During breakfast, they talked on indifferent subjects; and, after it was over, Mr. Lucas took the admiral into his study.

‘As I had a sincere regard for Admiral

“I am,” said Mr. Lucas,

“a poor old man, who has been in the service of the navy for many years, and who has had the pleasure of being acquainted with the admiral, and who has been in his friendship, terminating only with his death in the service—I understand that

Lucas replied, ‘He had, Sir, a sister whom I have vainly sought to discover. They both left home under very strange circumstances; his sister is said to have eloped with a man of dissipation, and his sister herself, ruined by the same course of dissipation, did not long survive. These calamitous events hastened the admiral’s death—nay, I believe the sister’s conduct accelerated it.’ ‘I suppose then,’ said Admiral Mordaunt, ‘your resentment induced him to be so severe to others.’

‘Estates,’ replied Mr. Lucas, ‘and property, came into the possession of the admiral, Mr. Le Brun, a man who was anxious to befriend Admiral Sydney, and who was the friend of his life, and under some circumstances. Mr. Le Brun is now no more, and the admiral’s estates are in possession of his daughter and son-in-law, Captain Roberts.’

‘I am,’ said Mr. Lucas, ‘a poor old man, who has been in the service of the navy for many years, and who has had the pleasure of being acquainted with the admiral, and who has been in his friendship, terminating only with his death in the service—I understand that

‘I have heard a good report of him, and am doubly rejoiced to hear it confirmed by your testimony—because if such be his character, he will do justice to the family of Admiral Sydney, whatever may be his legal claims.’

‘Believe me Sir,’ resumed Mr. Lucas, ‘no event, I am certain, could happen more gratifying to Captain Roberts, than that of rendering service to any branch of the Sydney family.’

‘I am heartily glad of it,’ exclaimed Admiral M’Bride, ‘and I should be exceedingly sorry, if a son of Neptune did not prove a son of honesty; and generosity to boot!—and to convince you, Sir, that mine is not a visit of impertinence or mere curiosity, I must inform you, that Miss Sydney is yet living.’

‘What!’ cried Mr. Lucas, his eyes glistening with pleasure, ‘the dear daughter of my dear friend?’

‘I mean,’ said the admiral, ‘his sister.’

‘Well,’ Mr. Lucas observed, ‘Miss Sydney, with all her follies, will, I am sure, be welcome to Sydney-Grove, and will find a protector in Captain Roberts, if she has not forfeited every claim to it.’

‘I rather think,’ answered the admiral, ‘that she has the strongest of all claims to it—for she is poor, and in prison.’

‘In prison!’ cried Mr. Lucas—‘is it even so? Alas, poor lady—I shall always have in remembrance the last visit I paid her—it was

“I am not at all surprised at this,” said the admiral, “God lend it may pass off without running into an excess of severity,” the admiral said, “he would not suppose Miss Sydney had had any thing, that should exclude her from protection, or general commendation.”
“But Miss Louisa Sydney!” said Mr. Lucas with an enquiring eye.

“The fate of Miss Louisa Sydney,” replied the admiral, “I am sorry to observe, is a mystery.”

Mr. Lucas shook his head—“Happily the day she quitted Sydney-Grove, for Vener square! The admiral parted with her willingly, but yet was willing that his daughter should receive accomplishments becoming her birth, and mix in society becoming her station. Her errors struck the heart of her father, and I never reflect on them without tears, for they wounded the peace, and at length, cut short the life of my friend.”

As he pronounced these last words, his voice faltered, and a tear stood in his eye.

“I wish,” said the admiral, “her father were living, to know the fate of his daughter; he would, doubtless, have rejoiced in receiving in his arms a repentant child.”

“O!” cried Mr. Lucas, “it would have given him new life, and he had yet been young; as, could his daughter have been restored to him—a repentant child would have been a blessing.”

welcome to him than all the treasures in the world.'

'But how much more,' said the admiral, 'how much more would he have rejoiced to know that his child was calumniated—that she was innocent.'

'Calumniated!—innocent!' cried Mr. Lucas, with an air of astonishment. 'Did she not elope from her aunt's?'

'She eloped, indeed, but it was pecuniary distress, the dread of her father's anger, and the fear of her aunt's ruin, that compelled her flight; not any disgraceful intercourse with a menial, or any passion that modesty need to blush at.'

'Sir,' said Mr. Lucas, 'I am all amazement! and the more so, that such being the case, she did not acquaint her father—but you say she dreaded her father's anger.—But, believe me, Sir, you know not how deeply I am interested in all that concerns her. Is *she* also poor, and in prison?'

'Sir, she is neither poor, nor in prison—if that doctrine by which you encourage us to bear the evils of life be true, she is in a safe harbour, with her father.'

'Dear young lady! is she too, cut off?—I fear then, she died in great distress!'

'She did not die, Sir, without leaving a representative.'

'A representative!—what, then she *did*?—'

'Sir, I have reason to believe she did nothing unbecoming Admiral Sydney's daughter.'

But the lady, who was interested in the story, and who, however, she was not, still she cleared up to her the fact. 'She is, she has left a child, a young man, a lad worthy of his birth.' 'And his father, Sir?' '—' 'Yes, Sir, his father could have told you about it, and unravelled the whole mystery; but it so happened that two days ago, I saw him.'

Mr. Lucas started, and stared wildly at the admiral—'flew him!'

'Why, yes, or he would probably have slain me.'

'Ah! Sir,' said Mr. Lucas, 'how cruel and inhuman is that custom, falsely derived from a sense of honor, which compels gentlemen, in the profession of arms, particularly, to assassinate one another!'

'You mistake the matter,' replied the admiral—'he whom I slew was a highwayman, a robber!'

'Alas! alas! poor Louisa Sydney!—How, Sir, could she be connected with *such* a man, and yet do nothing unbecoming the daughter of Admiral Sydney?'

'I must, now,' resumed the admiral, 'acquaint you with such particulars as have come to my knowledge, and you shall be made acquainted with the facts, as far as I have been able to ascertain them; and I am sure you will gladly assist me in restoring to any part of Admiral Sydney's family, the rights they may be entitled to.'

Mr. Lucas assured admiral M'Bride that there was nothing in this world in which he should more ardently engage himself; 'and when I come to tell you,' he added, 'how much, and how deeply I am indebted to that family, you would accuse me of the blackest ingratitude did I omit any opportunity of evincing by every means in my power, how much I respect and revere it.'

The admiral now related the history of Alfred, as it had been delivered to him by Mrs. Howard and Martha; and concluded by informing Mr. Lucas, that Alfred was at this moment waiting for him at the inn in the village.

'Well, Sir,' said Mr. Lucas, 'all this would sound like the tale of a romance, did we not know,

'The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate,

'Puzzled with mazes, and perplex'd with errors!'

'But it occurs to my mind, that I have seen this boy before, even whilst he was an infant and a beggar boy; for, according to the description you have given me of his early wanderings, and of his having been in this part of the country, and more especially from the name of Alfred, it must have been the urchin to whom, intending to give six-pence, I inadvertently gave a small coin, which I greatly valued. His mother, he said, or as it now appears, his foster-mother, was ill in a neighbouring barn. If it be the same, he will probably re-

collect something of these circumstances. It brings them more strongly to my recollection, is, the anxiety my daughter expressed to, and to shelter this poor child and its mother when, on my return, I told his story—as if my own child had been endued with a presentiment, that she ought to assist that of the gypsy. She even went in search of them; but returned disappointed, and chagrined that her search was vain.

‘I will soon give you an opportunity,’ said the admiral, ‘of questioning him on these and such other points as you may think proper. I hope you will take a dinner with me at the inn, and while it is preparing, you and Mr. Johnstone may re-visit those scenes which it is probable he knew as a beggar boy, and some of which I heartily hope he may soon know as a proprietor. But, tell me candidly, Sir, with respect to Captain Roberts—is he so circumstanced in the world, as to resign with cheerfulness, a property, which I conclude is extensive, and from which he must have derived great advantages?’

‘His private fortune,’ replied Mr. Lucas, ‘is large, and his mind is as liberal as his fortune is ample. Mr. Le Brun, his late father-in-law, had a handsome seat in another part of the country; thither Captain and Mrs. Roberts went yesterday; in consequence of which I am this day going to take possession of Sydney-Grove house, which we occupy alternately, though each prefers his own residence;

We do not choose to leave that splendid mansion merely to the care of a servant. However, I shall instantly dispatch a messenger to my friend Roberts, signifying that his immediate presence is necessary at Sydney-Grove, which, I trust, you, Sir, and Mr. Johnstone, will consider as your home, till the captain's arrival, who, I assure you, in great sincerity, so far from regretting, will feel a pleasure in resigning it to this young man, if he shall, indeed be found the legitimate heir of Louisa Sydney.'

After this conversation, Mr. Lucas accompanied the admiral to his inn, from which he almost immediately departed with Alfred, as related in the last chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Views and Disquisitions.

MR. LUCAS and Alfred pursued their walk. 'From the communications which your friend, the worthy admiral, has made to me,' said Mr. Lucas, 'I am inclined to believe that though you do not recollect *me*, you will remember some of these places—for I understand you were, in your infancy, under the care of gypsey-woman.

'I was, indeed,' replied Alfred; 'and now I do think that in yonder barn my mother lay ill, and we were compelled to quit

the place suddenly, on account of a gentleman threatening the woman who was with me, tho' he at the same time gave me what was supposed to be a six-pence, but which proved to be a coin of no value to us. The vexation occasioned by our being obliged to remove and the six-pence being bad, made me recollect what I should otherwise have completely forgotten.

'It is not to be supposed,' answered Mr. Lucas, 'after all these years, that you should recollect the person who thus threatended you, and probably, nothing but the loss of that coin, which was a rarity, would have made me recollect it.'

'Are you, then, the gentleman?' asked Alfred.

'I am, indeed.'

'Ah, Sir! I have, since that time, gone through many scenes of distress, and I now exist on the bounty of a lady, whom providence has raised to be my friend.'

'The admiral has told me the particulars of your story, and I am glad to find that you merit the attention of those who are willing to befriend you.'

Alfred bowed.

So far as the identity of Mr. Johnstone and the veracity of Martha was concerned as to these particulars, Mr. Lucas was perfectly satisfied, and requested Alfred to accompany him to Sydney-Grove, where they now found Mrs. Neville, and the rest of the family. Mr. Lucas informed his daughter that Adm.

Mr. Bride and Mr. Johnstone were their visitors, waiting the return of Captain Roberts, and desired preparations to be made accordingly.

After they had taken some refreshment, Mr. Lucas and Alfred returned to the admiral, who had employed his time in writing to Mrs. Howard an account of all that had transpired. The party passed a cheerful afternoon, and in the evening, the admiral's carriage conveyed them to Sydney-Grove.

When they retired to rest, Alfred was put into a room which commanded an extensive view, including a part of the woods which had once sheltered him as a beggar boy. The moon was up, and he stood a considerable time at the window reflecting on past transactions, and his present melancholy state, for such he conceived it to be, while he thought, and when did he cease to think on Eliza Howard? He felt for her all the fervor of a first and pure affection. Her image was constantly before him; and he appeared less informed, and was less communicative than he would have been, had not that lovely idea, constantly pervaded his mind, and absorbed its powers. But his imagination was vivid, and his heart beat with all the ardor of passion. The scenery before him, though beautifully tinted with moon-beams, appeared dull and lifeless, as the Paphian isle in the absence of its goddess; and he retired to rest, trusting to find that felicity in his dreams, which he despaired

of ever seeing realized—the felicity of beholding Eliza Howard, and breathing before her uninterrupted vows of eternal affection.

Part of the next morning was passed in viewing the house, over the principal part of which Mr. Lucas went with the admiral and Alfred. Its chief characteristic was that of lofty magnificence ; which, however, was not of an ancient complexion, nor yet certainly modern. The galleries were hung with family portraits, and several of the principal apartments contained some finished productions of the Italian school.

The folding-doors of the saloon were scarcely thrown open, before Alfred started back, and changed color so visibly, that Mr. Lucas noticed it. ‘What is it, Sir, that surprises you?’

‘The picture to the right, over the chimney-piece !—Look, Sir,’ said Alfred, addressing the admiral, ‘it is the very image of Miss Howard.’

‘It is, indeed,’ rejoined the admiral ;—‘please to inform us Sir, whose portrait this is?’

‘It is an exquisite likeness,’ replied Mr. Lucas, ‘of the admiral’s daughter ; yes, that is Louisa Sydney.’

They looked upon it some time, and proceeded ; but Alfred, casting his eyes round the room, soon returned to the spot. ‘He thinks,’ said Mr. Lucas, ‘that he is viewing

the portrait of his mother.—But who, Sir, is Miss Howard ?

The admiral explained.

‘ If I may judge from his emotions, and from the ardor with which he gazes on that face, he entertains a deep affection for Miss Howard.’

‘ It is probable enough,’ observed the admiral ; ‘ for his mind is certainly enveloped in some secret ; he has not the cheerfulness natural to youth ; and he knows not that his own fate is involved in any mystery ; he has no reason to be melancholy, for his present situation is by far the best he has ever known.’

‘ It is most likely, then,’ said Mr. Lucas, ‘ that he suffers under a concealed passion for this Miss Howard.’

‘ I wish it may be so,’ replied the admiral ; ‘ for it would be impossible for him, supposing his pretensions justified, to make a more accomplished girl, the mistress of this mansion.’

‘ You prepossess me much in her favour,’ Mr. Lucas said. They were now joined by Alfred, who reluctantly quitted the object which had so forcibly attracted his attention. From the house, they proceeded to the gardens and pleasure-grounds, Mr. Lucas pointing out the favourite spots of the late admiral, the improvements made by Captain Roberts, and some few arrangements of his own. The whole exhibited much taste ; there was such a distribution of wood and water, as could not but gratify the eye that loves to wander over those

works of art, which profess to give unbroken graces to nature. Alfred beheld all these scenes with the pleasure a well-turned mind receives from such pure sources. In his readings he had always delighted in rural descriptions, and he was now enjoying in reality, what he had so often seen in the paintings of the poets.

On their return to the house Alfred was left with Mrs. Neville, while the admiral and Mr. Lucas retired into the library, to converse on the business which now so totally engrossed them. 'Though I find myself interested in this young man's behalf,' said Mr. Lucas, 'and am charmed with your benevolence and that of Mrs. Howard, what you have related to me of his story has something in it so romantic, and proofs so essential are wanting, that I am at a loss in what manner we shall proceed, to verify it sufficiently, to establish Mr. Johnstone's claim; or more properly the claim of his friends, who have humanely withheld from him the knowledge of it, lest his hopes might be frustrated.'

'We do, indeed,' replied the admiral, 'rely principally on the testimony of a poor woman, who seems not, however, to possess the art of deceiving though she has once been a fortune-teller. I see many difficulties arise in the way of this young man's substantiating any legal right, as the grandson of Admiral Sydney. For the marriage of his father, it must be confessed, we have no proof. The circumstances under which she came to

woman, were such, as would naturally excite suspicion of her conduct ; and, as to the identity of the child, we have no testimony but that of the same woman. There is much mystery attached to the affair ; and no gentleman would relinquish a property of such magnitude, but to claims the most unquestionable, especially as it is optional, Mr. Le Brun, I understand, succeeding under the admiral's will.* After a pause, he added, ' You will permit me to observe, that the object of my present journey, on behalf of this young man, is not to claim, but to enquire.'

Mr. Lucas assured the admiral, that he would be fully gratified on the return of Captain Roberts, which might be expected in the course of two or three days. In the meantime, he again entreated the admiral to consider himself as at home.

Whilst this conversation was passing in the library, Alfred was entertaining Mrs. Neville with some particulars of his own history, and the praises of Mrs. and Miss Howard. On the last of these subjects he was so lavish, that his fair auditor, like her father, readily concluded what was the situation of his heart.

They were now joined by the admiral and Mr. Lucas ; and they had not long been engaged in general conversation, before a messenger arrived from Image-Place, with a request that Mr. Lucas would attend Mr. Goodwin, who was dangerously ill. To the bed of sickness Mr. Lucas was never summoned in vain ;

and when he came to that of Goodwin, he found Mrs. Goodwin, sitting by fit dissolved tears. Ever since the return of Captain Roberts, Goodwin had suppressed the native ranniness of his disposition, and conducted himself with decency towards his wife. But he remained totally deficient in that affection, and those attentions, which alone form the basis of conjugal happiness. So that, for many years, Mrs. Goodwin felt the force of retribution for her own conduct towards her first husband, the deceased host of the Castle.

Goodwin in a feeble voice, told Mr. Lucas, that he now saw, when it was too late, the folly and the uselessness, not to say the wickedness of the life he had spent—that he had never been happy himself, nor ever endeavoured to promote the happiness of others; but promised himself amendment, should his life be prolonged—and fearing that might not be the case, he had solicited the prayers of Mr. Lucas on the present occasion.

That worthy man was gratified, he said, in hearing Mr. Goodwin's acknowledgment of his past errors; that self-reproach was at all times bitter, but doubly so on a death-bed. He trusted that all his worldly affairs were settled, and that so far, he was in a fit state to join in the prayers he had so earnestly desired.

Goodwin declared, that giving to his wife all he possessed, would be far from a sufficient atonement for the unkindness which he had, but too uniformly, treated

and desired Mr. Lucas to indulge him with his prayers, as he found himself incapable of sustaining further converse. The reverend man performed his office. Mrs. Goodwin, kneeling by the bed-side, holding in both her hands, one of her husband's, and bathing it with her tears. Mr. Lucas had scarcely performed half his duty, before the soul, for which he was praying, quitted the body.

Mr. Lucas, after administering consolation to Mrs. Goodwin, and offering the assistance of a disinterested friend, in any concerns in which she might require such assistance, returned to Sydney-Grove.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Love and Law.

TWO days afterwards, Captain Roberts arrived with his lady, whom he thought proper to bring on this occasion, Mr. Lucas having in his letter, intimated to him the nature of the business on which he wished his immediate return; and she being the daughter of Mr. Le Brun, was personally interested in whatever respected his property.

Captain Roberts was highly gratified, on finding in his house an officer so distinguished in the service he loved, as Admiral M'Bride; nor was the admiral less pleased with the manly

appearance and open conduct of the admiral's
 terms.—'Whether by sea or by land,' said the
 latter, 'we always find Admiral Mr. Bridgman en-
 gaged in a good cause—and I owe the honour
 of his present visit, to that benevolence
 which his character is distinguished.'

'These are handsome compliments,' replied
 the admiral, 'from one, whom it is possible we
 may deprive of a very considerable estate.'

'It came to me under such extraordinary
 circumstances,' answered Captain Roberts,
 'that I have always considered it rather as a
 stewardship, than an inheritance.'

'I am happy,' the admiral said, 'that the
 justice and liberality of your disposition pre-
 clude all possibility of legal wrangling; and
 that, if our claim be just, it will not be imped-
 ed by needless altercation. But,' continued
 the admiral, 'this gentleman,' pointing to
 Mr. Lucas, 'has fully satisfied me as to the
 conduct we might expect on your part.'

Captain Roberts expressed a hope, that the
 speedy decision of the matter in question would
 not accelerate the admiral's departure, but
 that he would prolong his visit as much as he
 conveniently could. To this the admiral an-
 swered by a bow of assent.

Mr. Lucas now informed Captain Roberts
 of the death of Goodwin. 'I should be a
 poorite,' said the Captain, 'if I said other-
 wise than that I am *not* sorry for it.—Poor Fanny
 when she was young and foolish, she neglected
 our mother, and tyrannized over Symple.

the retaliation she met with from Goodwin, though brutal and unpardonable in him, has had a beneficial effect upon her. She has experienced some years of infelicity—it will be her own fault, if the rest of her days are not happy.'

Mr. Lucas briefly related to Captain Roberts all the circumstances respecting the claim of Alfred; informing him at the same time, the whole matter being concealed from that young man, who deserved, he believed, their benevolent attention, at least, should he not prove to be the grandson of Admiral Sydney. Captain Roberts said, he would willingly concur in any measure that should be deemed proper, which might contribute to the advantage of a person entitled to such recommendations. He wished, however, that the matter might rest for a few days, as he was anxious to attend his sister, and to render her those services which her widowed state required. The Admiral declared, that he felt himself too much interested in the event of this business, to permit his thinking the few days lost which he could pass in waiting the decision, and pleasantly added, that he should think himself ungrateful to complain whilst he was on board so magnificent a vessel, in so pleasant an harbour, and therefore, leaving every thing to the integrity of the gentlemen before him, he would patiently wait to know the issue.

Alfred, meanwhile, was passing his time with Mrs. Neville and Mrs. Roberts, who both

rallied him on his panegyric upon her portrait.—‘Ah!’ said Alfred, ‘you may judge for yourself, if you please—but if I admired her, merely for her personal charms, you could not but do me, when I assure you, that she is the very counterpart of the most beautiful picture in this house—for,’ added he, bowing, ‘I do not recollect, ladies seeing either of yours.’

‘And pray, Sir,’ asked Mrs. Neville, ‘whose picture was that?’

‘O, that I don’t know,’ answered Alfred, ‘but it is in the saloon.’

‘Well, then,’ said Mrs. Roberts, ‘let me go and see who this wonderful creature is, and away they tripped up stairs, Alfred following. As soon as they opened the door, Alfred sprung before them, and pointed out the portrait as they walked up the saloon. ‘Indeed, Mr. Johnstone,’ cried Mrs. Neville, ‘if that be the resemblance of Miss Howard, she must be lovely!’

‘That, I believe,’ said Mrs. Roberts, ‘is the portrait of Miss Sydney, the admiral’s daughter.’

‘It is, answered Mrs. Neville;’ and it scarcely does justice to her charms. Poor dear girl! she was just nineteen when she sat for that picture, which the admiral scarcely missed a day contemplating, after she left Sydney Grove.’

‘And pray, madam,’ said Alfred, ‘is that lady living?’

‘That I know not,’ replied Mrs. Neville.

walking towards a window, and wiping her eyes—‘that I know not—for after she went to reside with her aunt, in Grosvenor-square, some occurrences, which’—

‘See! see!’ cried Mrs. Roberts, there is a post-chaise passing up the lawn—I wonder who is coming!’

Alfred cast a look:—‘Good Heaven!’ he exclaimed, ‘it is my mother and—and—Miss Howard!’

‘Come then,’ said Mrs. Neville, ‘let us descend and welcome them.’ They had not quite reached the door, before Miss Howard, enquiring for Admiral M‘Bride, entered the hall accompanied by Martha,

The ladies and the admiral appeared almost at the same instant. ‘You will not be surprised, Sir,’ said Miss Howard, addressing the admiral, ‘at our appearance here, after the letter you sent to my mamma—she thought it quite necessary that Mrs. Johnstone should come, as she might personally explain circumstances relative to’——

The admiral, wishing the matter still to remain concealed from Alfred, who was present, interrupted the young lady: ‘My good friend Mrs. Howard’s attention to my concerns,’ said the admiral, ‘merits my kindest acknowledgments.’ Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Neville conducted them into the parlour, where they were welcomed by Captain Roberts and Mr. Lucas; the admiral observing that they were friends come on some urgent business of his

The unexpected arrival of Alfred and Miss Martha filled Alfred with delightful amazement. It was not long, however, before he began to reflect on what he had done, and to wonder wherein Martha could be any way serviceable to the admiral. As possible, he had no opportunity of asking her, and, before any such opportunity could occur, the admiral took care to caution both Miss Howard and Martha on the propriety of secrecy.

The affairs of Mrs. Goodwin claiming the attention of Captain Roberts, and the funeral being near at hand, it was agreed, that all parties should remain at Sydney-Grove, and no further investigation take place, till that ceremony was over. Alfred was rejoiced to hear this determination, as it promised him the pleasure of almost continually contemplating the beauties of Miss Howard, who was not less pleased with the idea of a few days residence in so charming a place, and with feeling so congenial to her feelings, as she instantly conceived she might find in Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Neville.

Miss Howard awoke early the next morning, and the prospect from her window was too inviting, not to tempt her to walk out. She had scarcely passed into the retired part of the garden, at the back of the mansion, before she was met by Alfred, who had long been waiting, and was waiting with impatience for the opportunity which should again bring him to the spot.

Miss Howard. This meeting produced a little confusion on both sides, which the young lady soon dissipated, by entering into rapturous conversations on the spot they were traversing.

‘It always fills me with regret,’ said Miss Howard. ‘when I reflect, that scenes like these are usually the property of those who have little enjoyment in them, but who generally prefer the sophisticated pleasures of a town life, to those of nature, thus in her perfection. Were such a place as this mine, I should quit it with as much regret as our First Parents quitted Eden.’

Alfred declared, that rural scenes always gave him more pleasure than any other; ‘and if it were not coveting one’s neighbour’s goods he added, ‘I should wish this domain were mine, that I might shew my gratitude to those I love most, by presenting it to you.’

Miss Howard courtesied, and expressed her pleasure, that her mamma had been any way instrumental to his welfare, so as to excite his gratitude.

‘My admiration of Miss Howard,’ replied Alfred, ‘is not less than my gratitude to her beloved parent; and I solemnly protest, that there is nothing this world could give which I should so ardently desire, as to prove myself worthy of the favours I have received, and of your deeming me not unworthy of them.’

‘Indeed, Mr. Johnstone,’ said Miss Howard, ‘I am sure my mamma thinks herself happy in having it at all in her power to shew the sense

the debt of the service you rendered her, in saving her from the hands of villainy.—And on my part, I shall always cherish that obligation to you, which is due to him, who has, in this emergency, saved her life.

‘Would to Heaven!’ cried Alfred, pensively, ‘would to Heaven, that in saving her, if it were so, or in doing any becoming act, I had lost my own!’

‘Nay, Mr. Johnstone,’ answered Miss Howard with a look of tender concern, ‘nay, you ought rather to wish heaven may prolong your life, since you find it thus serviceable to your friends.’

‘But,’ replied Alfred, ‘consider how irksome life must be to him, who is precluded the possibility of happiness!—who unfortunately adores that he never can possess!’

‘It is our duty,’ Miss Howard said, ‘to check all inordinate desire; and it most foolishly I cannot think you capable of, to let your heart on ought, which reason tells you never can be yours.’

A deep sigh escaped the bosom of Alfred.

‘Besides,’ she continued, ‘we are always to bear in recollection the chances and changes to which life is subject; and, that the wheel of fortune, or rather say, the will of providence, so often and so suddenly ‘exalts the humble and the meek,’ pouring riches into the lap of poverty, that it argues a cowardly and misbegotten mind far different from yours, to murmur in despair. You know not that even this

ney may not be productive of some favorable event."

She recollected herself, and paused. "I shall, indeed, esteem life of some value," answered Alfred, "if you encourage me to live."

"Live!" exclaimed Miss Howard; "why, every thing calls on you to live, and to be happy; you have youth, and health, and friends."

"Indeed, you have!" cried a voice behind them. They both started and turned. It was Mr. Lucas, who overheard Miss Howard's last words. He apologized, and said, the turn of an angle had brought him unexpectedly upon them. They expressed the pleasure they had in meeting with him. "I am sorry," said Mr. Lucas, "that Mr. Johnstone does not seem to enjoy that cheerfulness, which might naturally be expected in one, who as you have just observed, has youth, health, and friends."

"Sir," replied, Alfred, "I am grateful for the blessings I enjoy; and I feel myself happy in all things except that of my total inability of proving by actions, the extent of my gratitude."

"Miracles have not yet ceased," returned Mr. Lucas—"time works them every day,—and the rolling year is full of them."—"Circumstances may arise favorable to your best desires; meantime, you will always feel a felicity, even in wishing the felicity of others."

They proceeded in their walk, the conversation becoming general, but interesting; and

anchor, without being wrecked on the points of law, or having our course retarded by the long calms of chancery.'

'Sir,' replied Mr. Lucas, 'the case could not be put in a fairer train of settlement. Mr. Montague unites with the most profound knowledge of the law, the magnanimity and liberality of a gentleman.'

'I do not wish, however,' said Captain Roberts, 'that you should rely solely on his opinion; if it prove unfavorable to Mr. Johnstone, though, be his decision what it may, I shall acquiesce in it with great cheerfulness; you may afterwards have recourse, either to law, or equity, as you may be advised.'

'From the character you have given to this Gentleman,' rejoined the admiral, 'I fancy we shall not feel ourselves under any necessity of going further; and I trust, this business is not so deeply involved in perplexity, as to prevent our ready concurrence in his decision.'

The same day, the admiral, Captain Roberts, and Mr. Lucas, riding out together, called upon Mr. Montague, and the admiral briefly communicated to him the particulars of this extraordinary history.

Mr. Montague, giving due credit to the admiral M'Bride and Mrs. Howard, for their good intentions, and benevolent exertions, declared that he conceived the claim to be grounded on an entire imposition on the part of this Martha Johnstone. He very highly commended the gentlemen for conducting

the young man, as he could not experience any disappointment from false hopes ; and he assured them, that the story was too old and romantic, to be worthy of serious enquiry.

‘But,’ said Captain Roberts, ‘it is certain that this woman did know Louisa Sydney ; for, she had nearly fainted at the sight of her picture in the saloon, where, indeed, she begs to pass most of her time.’

‘That may be,’ answered Mr. Montague. ‘She *might* know Miss Sydney, and she *may* be in possession of the admiral’s picture ; but how far do these things go to prove this boy being the child of Louisa Sydney ? or being such, that he is legitimate ? However, it is fortunate, that this Martha Johnstone is at Sydney-Grove ; and, if you will have the goodness to let her be brought to me to-morrow, I will examine her as to the necessary points ; and on the succeeding day, I will attend you at the Grove, and give you my final opinion on the result of my enquiries.’

The gentlemen departed, well satisfied with Mr. Montague’s observations ; and Martha attended him the next morning, accompanied by one of Captain Roberts’s servants, who was ordered to wait, and bring her back. She continued with Mr. Montague upwards of five hours ; and, the succeeding day, at noon, that gentleman appeared at Sydney-Grove, for the purpose of giving his decided opinion on the pretensions of Alfred.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Conclusion.

ON Mr. Montague's arrival, he had a conversation with Captain Roberts, in which he informed him, that his sentiments had undergone an alteration, and in consequence of what Martha had imparted to him, he thought the claim of the boy was well founded.

That being the case, Captain Roberts expressed a wish that Mr. Montague's decision and his reasons for it, might be declared before all the parties concerned; and, as they could not but be curious and interesting, perhaps Mr. Montague would have no objection to including among his auditors, all the ladies. Mr. Montague left that entirely to the discretion of Captain Roberts, who immediately conducted him into the drawing-room where sat Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Neville, Mrs. Howard, and Martha. The Admiral and Mr. Lucas soon after entered, with Alfred, when Mr. Montague thus addressed :

'I am happy to communicate to you an entire change in your fortune and circumstances in life, which you owe to the good and humane interference of the worthy General M'Bride, and the no less worthy Mrs. Howard.'

Alfred bowed with great emotion. Not all eyes been turned on him. It had been seen, that Miss Howard was less agitated

... Mr. Lucas, and
... Mr. Montague took from
... papers, which he laid on the
... before him. He repeated to the admiral
... what he had just before said
... Captain Roberts. 'This,' added he, 'is
... the most extraordinary case that ever
... my attention, or, perhaps, that of any
... of judicature. It is not necessary for me,
... the present instance, to detail the adventures
... this young gentleman, with which I have
... made acquainted by his foster-mother,
... certainly deserves well, for the care and at-
... tion she has bestowed. But it is necessary for
... to shew the nature and propriety of his
... to the estates of the late Admiral Sydney.
... The admiral had a daughter, Louisa Syd-
... y, who, some time before her father's death,
... fled in London, with an aunt, from whose
... use, it was reported, she had departed in a
... highly discreditable to herself, and cer-
... ially fatal to her father's peace; for, he did
... long survive it. His sister, about the same
... reduced by a course of dissipation, fled
... France. The health of the admiral had
... been infirm; and, finding he could not
... sustain this shock, he instantly determined on
... making a new will, and destroying that which
... was in my possession, by which he had devised
... his daughter all he possessed, with the ex-
... ception of five thousand pounds to his sister,
... 10000 to myself, and his servants, constitut-
... ing me his executor, and the guardian of

Louisa. The admiral dying, before I could either see him, or receive his instructions, his will yet remains among these papers.

The Admiral's *last* will is in his own handwriting, and which I here produce: in this he declares, That in consequence of the misconduct of his daughter and his sister, he deemed them incapable of preserving property; and therefore gives all his real and personal estate to his friend, Mr. Le Brun; leaving it to his discretion to make such provision for his daughter, Louisa, as he should think proper. Here is also a letter from the Admiral to Mr. Le Brun, in which he is informed of this will, and requesting him to consider the names of Lucas and Roberts, as particularly dear to him, meaning both our worthy friends, here present.

Under this authority, Mr. Le Brun took possession. Due means were used to discover Louisa Sydney, but in vain. Year after year elapsed, till at length Mr. Le Brun himself died, leaving to his son-in-law, Captain Roberts, all he possessed; in consequence of which he has several years been, and now is, the representative of Admiral Sydney, and in the enjoyment of his property, with the discretion power vested in Mr. Le Brun.

By a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances, and such as I should be inclined to disbelieve without strong vouchers, it appears that Louisa Sydney, labouring under her father's displeasure, married a Mr. Johnstone, who

age induced her to quit his house, while in the late of pregnancy. In the cottage of this good woman, whose proper name is Martha Thompson, Mrs. Johnstone delivered of a boy; and this young gentleman'—

Alfred, exceedingly agitated, looked tensely on Martha: 'Are not you, then—who have been the best of parents—are not you my mother?'—

'I am not'—

Mr. Montague was proceeding; Alfred interrupted him.—But 'my mother, Sir!—my *al* mother!—where is she?'

'In giving you life, she sacrificed her own.'

Alfred shed tears.—Mr. Montague continued: 'We come now to the present state of the question, which is very simple. If Louisa Sydney was really married to Mr. Johnstone, and this be his son, there can no doubt remain as to the Admiral's *real* estates giving the right of Mr. Alfred Johnstone, as grandson, the Admiral's *last* will not touching those, for want of due form; but, the *personal* property, which, with the money in the hands, amounts to about eight thousand pounds, goes, by the last will, to Captain Roberts, as a representative of Mr. Le Brun; the want of form in this paper not fulfilling the testator's intention in that respect.

'But you will all naturally ask, and indeed would appear an insurmountable obstacle, to the marriage of Louisa Sydney shall be proved, after the reports which have prevailed,

regarding her connexion, which has always been represented as illicit : and, how to prove the identity of her child, allowing that she is one? Mrs. Thompson has produced, as given to her by Louisa Sydney, the picture of an admiral, whom his dying daughter requested her to seek out, and to present to him as her grandson. I will not hurt the feelings of a good woman, by noticing the various ways in which chance might have thrown that picture into her possession. I shall only remark, that it conveys no legal proof on which to substantiate any claim. But, to put the question beyond all doubt, and no longer to keep you in suspense, here is the only testimony which we can fully ascertain the credit due Mrs. Thompson's story ; she has, fortunately preserved the pocket-book, which Louisa, at her death-bed, gave to her, containing bank bills to a considerable amount, and other papers. Among these, is a certificate of a young lady's marriage with Mr. Johnson, and a letter, which, with the picture, they have been presented to the admiral by Mrs. Thompson, in the event of her seeing him. His previous death, and her subsequent misfortunes, not only prevented that interview taking place, but involved her in such a series of adventures, as to preclude all possibility of her coming to any proper knowledge of the unhappy lady's family, or at all judging how to prosecute the rights of him, whom she knew to be the grandson of Admiral Sydney.

* Of the authenticity of this certificate

marriage, I entertain no doubt; and, I am confirmed in the veracity of Mrs. Thompson, by this letter, which I know to be the hand-writing of Louisa Sydney. That this young gentleman is, therefore, the legitimate son of Louisa, and the grandson of the late Admiral, whose christian name he bears, can be disputed on no other ground, than the identity of his person; and I see no reason to question that, the rest of the evidence, and the particulars, of the story, so strongly coinciding.— Mrs. Thompson assures me, she never had a child of her own. However, to put this matter on as firm a footing as we possibly can, I advise, that Mr. Lucas, as a magistrate, do administer to Mrs. Thompson an oath, importing, that Mr. Alfred Johnstone, here present, is the child of which that lady was delivered, who gave to her this picture and these papers.’

Mr. Lucas, more powerfully to impress the mind of Martha, requested all the company to rise; and taking the New Testament in his hand, he solemnly propounded the oath to her. The utmost silence prevailed. With equal solemnity, she kissed the book; and having done so, threw herself into the arms of Alfred, and burst into tears: God is witness, cried she, thou art the son of the lady who gave me the picture and the book.’

All having resumed their seats, Mr. Monague said, ‘I believe it will be needless for me to make any further remarks on the present occasion; indeed, I could add little more.’

Mrs. Neville spoke, apart, to her father, soon acquainted Alfred with the nature and extent of his obligations to his grandfather. Mrs. Neville added, 'It was his pleasure to give me a hundred pounds a year, because he loved my father, and wished to make me happy. Indeed, he then gave it to the poor—permit me to transfer it to one well worthy of it; I shall be happy to resign it in favor of Mr. Thompson.'

'Providence has been so bountiful,' replied Alfred, 'that I would rather confirm and double my grandfather's benefactions, and must excuse my refusing them, since he has taught me whom I ought to love and esteem.'

'Enough of business for to-day!' cried Captain Roberts; 'Mr. Montague will bring us with his company to dinner, which is now ready; and, to-morrow we will finally arrange all Mr. Johnstone's concerns.'

'Yes, yes,' replied the admiral; 'but I believe my secret will tell better to-morrow; so I will follow our Captain, and in to dinner.' A more convivial evening was seldom witnessed, and the company retired, well pleased at the termination of the business. Mr. Montague promised to attend the next day, at eleven.

Alfred awoke early the next morning, and began to consider whether he had not been in a long dream. Rising, he said, 'I am grateful to Heaven, and I ought to be happy—I have enough, it seems, to make many happy. But what felicity can abundance bring to me, unless I share it with?'—A profound sigh prevented his uttering the name: and he soon descended, trusting to meet with Miss Howard. He was disappointed; for, he did not see her at breakfast, when the ladies were all jokingly entreating the Admiral to reveal his secret. At last, he said, it must be done in full court, and he should wait till Mr. Montague arrived.

That gentleman, punctual to his time, appeared at twelve; and what the Admiral called a full court was soon formed. The business consisted in Captain Roberts and Mr. Montague delivering to Alfred all the writings and papers of his grandfather; Mr. Montague declaring to him the purpose of each. Whilst this ceremony was performing, Admiral M'Bride was called out of the room. After Alfred was thus invested with all his rights, and Mr. Lucas, whose fortunes had changed for the bet-

none, give me leave to introduce to you, your
aunt, Miss Sydney.'

'May dear Madam?' exclaimed Alfred
'how happy am I to embrace you!'

'I am proud,' she replied, 'to be introduced
to so amiable a relative as you are represented
to be, by this, my best of friends, who has re-
leased me from the depth of calamity.'

'I can never sufficiently thank the admiral,'
said Alfred, 'for his benevolence and attention
in my behalf. I will endeavour to deserve his
good opinion.'

'Ay,' cried the admiral. 'I have no doubt
of your proving yourself the grandson of my
brave friend; but I could not have introduced
your aunt to you without the assistance of an
agent, to whom, more than to me your thanks
are due.'

The admiral then opened the door, when
Miss Howard exclaimed, 'Good heaven! this
is my mamma!' Mrs. Howard had, indeed,

the emotions of our young friend, as the emotions of one on the point of suffering some injury, instead of coming to a large fortune. In fact is, this fortune will be a sad incumbrance to him, if it is not shared by—Nay, nay, you need not blush so—you know it is

is difficult to say, whether Miss Howard or Alfred was the more confused.

My dear, Eliza,' said Mrs. Howard, taking her daughter's hand, 'you know it was never my wish to controul your inclinations, because I knew you would never fix them on an proper object. The Admiral has strongly solicited me in Mr. Johnstone's favor—the rest remains with yourself; but all in good time.'

'All in good time, indeed,' rejoined the Admiral; 'no time could be better; here is Mr. Montague will tie the fortune in marriage settlements; here is Mr. Lucas will tie their hands in the church; and I am strangely mistaken if their hearts are not tied already.'

In the midst of the general glee, which pervaded the company, the lovers escaped that particular attention which must have greatly increased their confusion. The ladies all speedily retired; and the gentlemen remained to settle the necessary arrangements for the approaching nuptials; the admiral promising to stand, at the altar, to give the hand of Eliza to Alfred.

A few days, every thing was prepared:—and, according to the directions in the admiral's will, took the name of Sydney. Miss

Sydney received her five thousand pounds dependent of the sums which Alfred paid to release her from all subsisting embarrassments. On Martha he settled one hundred pounds a year for her life, if she remained at S. Grove; and two hundred, if she chose to reside elsewhere. To all the ladies, he made presents; and, to Eliza Howard, he gave family jewels, which had been carefully preserved in the family mansion. Matters were finally adjusted, and the ladies having put on their dresses, Eliza Howard was led to the altar by Alfred Johnstone Sydney; the admiring as the bride's father, and Mr. Sydney performing the ceremony of uniting two hearts whose hearts glowed with that pure and ardent affection, which could not fail of producing the mutual and constant felicity, by which Heaven meant peculiarly to distinguish a matrimonial union.

Thus terminated the *torments* of Alfred, whose whole infancy and youth had hitherto been marked by calamitous vicissitudes, resulting from the imprudence of a mother, in indulging herself in the fashionable dissipations of the time; while his own conduct had invariably obtained the protection of that providence which pays no respect to persons; and which, by its timely rewards, with happiness, the virtuous principles, and rectitude of heart, which uniformly distinguished the character of the BEGGAR BOY!

FINIS.

